













TOWARDS  
A SYSTEMATIC STUDY  
OF THE  
VEDĀNTA

(SREEGOPAL BAŚUMALLIK FELLOWSHIP LECTURES FOR 1929)

BY  
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“ . . . . . better youth  
Should strive through acts uncouth,  
Toward making, than repose on aught found made.”

—BROWNING.

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DEDICATED  
RESPECTFULLY TO THE'CHERISHED MEMORY OF  
**SIR ASHUTOSH MOOKERJEE**  
WHOSE SOUL WAS YOUNG AND WITH THE YOUNG  
UNTO THE LAST.



## PREFACE.

The following pages embody the course of twelve lectures on Vedānta Philosophy which, as the Sree Gopal Basumallik Fellow for the year 1929, I was called upon to deliver at this University. According to the terms of the Fellowship I was enjoined to deal 'especially with the place occupied by the Vedānta in the philosophical systems of the world and of its merits as compared with the Western schools of thought.' The conditions, while mapping out the course of my treatment of the subject and offering a chartered freedom in the mode of presentation, were none the less welcome to me. Far from proving a handicap, they provided just the official sanction for the method which I have instinctively followed in all my writings since my student days.

It is the early inspiration which I received, during my academic career, from our revered teacher Dr. (now Sir) Brajendra Nath Seal that has taught me to believe that a philosophical study, worth the name, must be either comparative or nothing. It is not the place to attempt a detailed examination of the grounds of that belief; nor need I be apologetic for having employed the method in question. The only remark, however, I shall allow myself to make in this connection is that the comparative method does not, and assuredly need not, impair or belittle, as some think it invariably does, the distinctive trait or individuality of Indian thought. The so-called comparative method, which makes out its sole concern to pick out the points of affinity to the utter neglect of the points of divergence between differing systems of thought, Eastern or Western, may surely be said to have missed its vocation. A comparative study, that commits itself *ab initio* to the discovery of the points of agreement only, eventually ends by bringing down all systems of thought to the dead level of a barren uniformity, and thus stultifies itself under the spell of that Night 'in which all cows are black.'

The enormity of the situation is heightened all the more when the affinities in question are sought to be explained as cases of conscious or unconscious borrowing. Believing, as I do, however, in fundamental human unity and solidarity, I am persuaded to think that every such discovery of close parallelism furnishes just the evidence needed for a belief of this kind—a unity which, as respecting differences, exhibits itself as a unity *in* variety, and not as a colourless uniformity. On the other hand, I do believe, and in that belief I yield probably to none, that Indian philosophic thought has, down the course of ages, maintained a well-marked individuality, which claims initial recognition from all its critics and interpreters. I use the term 'individuality' advisedly, and to me it connotes simply 'independence of growth.' Accordingly in substantiating this much-prized individuality of Indian thought, one need not go so far as to claim, on its behalf, an awful isolation that even defies comparison with all else. Indian thought has unduly suffered in the past under the pressure of an embarrassing charity and extravagant enthusiasm on the part of its well-meaning apologists. But we forget so often that moderation is a virtue that has its efficacy here as elsewhere.

In the execution of my task I have not pretended to be in any sense 'original', but have addressed myself to the more modest task of 'interpretation,' adopting as far as possible the technique of European philosophy. In getting up this course of lectures I have, accordingly, drawn freely upon the materials furnished by the two notable volumes of *Indian philosophy* by Prof. S. Radhakrishnan, and the *System of Vedantic Thought and Culture* by Dr. Mahendra Nath Sircar. To others I have also acknowledged my indebtedness at their proper places; but my obligations to Dr. M. N. Sircar's book, particularly in my tenth lecture, are too numerous to mention.

In conclusion I owe an apology to the readers of this volume for the copious mistakes that have, through sheer inadvertence, crept into it. I think I also owe it to the Press that I should take the entire responsibility for these errors upon myself, and have it on record here. The meticulous care

with which the Press people have all along worked to ensure a flawless production deserves more than a formal recognition from me. All our united efforts have, however, proved unavailing. All that I can plead on my own behalf is that I have had to wade through the proof-sheets quite single-handed, and so the crop of errors which still disfigure the book, even after the second reading of the proof-sheets, do but illustrate the psychological truth that the author of a book is generally unreliable as a reader of the proofs. An eleventh-hour attempt has, however, been made to retrieve the situation by incorporating in this volume a list of *Corrigenda*, by no means exhaustive, but none the less helpful in spotting out those vital mistakes that tend to affect the meaning of words as well as sentences.

UNIVERSITY OF CALCUTTA,

S. K. DAS.

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# LECTURE I

## INTRODUCTION.

If philosophy is but life brought to the focus of self-consciousness, then, assuredly, Vedānta, as Max Müller puts it, "is clearly the native philosophy of India."<sup>1</sup> Such a testimony, veridical as it is, is not to be accepted, however, without important reservations. His concluding reflection, "that, with the Hindus, the fundamental ideas of the Vedānta have pervaded the whole of their literature, have leavened the whole of their language, and form to the present day the common property of the people at large," may not unfairly be taken as an excursus on the initial statement. That Vedānta has, through the ages, gone on embodying the inmost stirrings of the soul of India is a pronouncement that bespeaks the depth of insight and imaginative sympathy which the Professor brings to the execution of his task—a task which, be it remembered, like the drawing of the bow of Ulysses by any lesser hand is attended with grave peril. It is to such a nature alone that is given the key to unlock the mysteries of the heart of India; for it is deep that calleth unto deep. Truly, here as elsewhere, many are called but few are chosen and to him that is chosen is vouchsafed the bliss of realisation (*Yamevaisha vṛṇute tena labhyaḥ*). And thus will burst upon us, with a flash of inner meaning, the full import of the much misunderstood saying—'to him that hath more shall be given.' It is idle to deny that many a sojourner in this realm, with all their ardour to make a pilgrimage into the heart of *Āryāvarta*, have stopped at the mere outposts, admiring, like Mammon, the 'trodden gold' more than the 'vision beatific.' Critics, again, there have been whose interest in the Vedānta extends so far as it serves as the target of the charges improvised *ad hoc* to meet the exigencies of the situation—the charges, namely, of nihilism, acosmism, illusionism, solipsism or even pantheism. Verily, they have their rewards, all and sundry! But, "*de profundis*"

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<sup>1</sup> The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy, P. 151.

is the unanimous verdict of all such critics, 'whatever' they may otherwise choose to think about its merits as a philosophical system.

As already premised, Max Müller's statement is to be punctuated with forward reference to what it may, not improperly, imply. The phrase 'native philosophy' may, for aught we know, easily be paraphrased into the much too complacent assurance that we are all 'born Vedāntists'. If it means no more than that ideas of the Vedānta permeate and enliven the cultural atmosphere in a way in which those of other indigenous systems of thought do not, then the interpretation is clearly beyond challenge. Indeed, it is no senseless exaggeration to say that every Hindu is suckled at the breast of the Vedāntic *ethos*, but it is just possible to gloat upon a mere possibility with a placid, pathetic contentment, and thus for ever remain a suckling in the realm of mature philosophic thinking. While it is true that of all persons it is the Hindu that has in him, *ceteris paribus*, the making of a true Vedāntist, it is none the less true that a mere potentiality is so often glorified into an actual possession, and thus rendered abortive. In the sphere of intellectual achievements—least of all, in that of philosophic pursuits—there is no established law of inheritance whereby one can claim to be a born legatee of a traditional faith; in fact, philosophic persuasion, like freedom, can never be made a gift of, it has always to be earned. It is on account of our sitting loose to this time-worn maxim—which, in its enunciation, approximates an empty platitude or truism and thus escapes notice—that we have come to discount an academic presentation of, and bestow a philosophic consecration on, stray musings and ramblings in Vedānta, bereft of a survival-value. The philosophic pilgrim's progress lies in cutting straight across this age-long accumulation of weeds, and journeying with resolute steps to the promised land, undeterred by the *ignis fatuus* of dilettantism. It is not hereby suggested that the Vedānta is the close preserve only of academic philosophy-mongers, but what is definitely repudiated is the incidence of dilettantism and desultory reading

with which the field is already overgrown. This is, to a certain extent, inevitable; for, in reliance on faulty logic, people so often ascribe the popularity enjoyed by the Vedānta to the absence of the steel frame of a philosophical system, and, proceeding on that assumption, read Vedānta as literature. Very few people possess an adequate idea of the initial strain on everyday experience, and sustained hard thinking that the Vedānta entails as a rule. Green's dictum "that we are Hegelian, so to speak, with only a fraction of our thought—on the Sundays of 'speculation', not on the weekdays of 'ordinary thought' " applies *mutatis mutandis* to our *de jure* claim in relation to Vedānta. Nevertheless it is a striking fact that immersed, as we are, in the commonsense valuations of our work-a-day life, we can in a moment rise to the sublime heights of the Vedānta, and breathe no less freely in the rarefied atmosphere thereof than we do on the plains.

Closely akin to these instances of Vedānta simplified is its representation as an art of life or as a practical science—a science, so to speak, of mysticism, or even of magic,—making out its sole concern to be a *meditatio mortis* culminating in the prescript of a happy euthanasia for its devotee. Nor is it unusual to come across the presentation of Vedānta as a *Lebensanschauung* or a 'synoptic' view of life based on the varieties of religious experience—of mystical intuitions and ecstatic revelations. This clearly entails a breach in our psychic continuum, and thus calls for a transvaluation of all values of life, that confessedly break down in the face of these abnormal experiences,—the distinction of 'subnormal' and 'supernormal' being altogether pointless in a psychological reference. While it is not indeed denied that the Vedānta, of all indigenous systems of thought, has evidently a close bearing upon practice, the claims of practice in this regard can easily be overrated and the character of Vedānta philosophy, as a whole and in detail, entirely misrepresented. Such a one-sided emphasis upon practice (*kriyā*) may not indeed crystallize as a definite philosophic creed of pragmatism; but, then, the main drift of Vedānta philosophy is a sustained protest against

the truth-claim of practical considerations, against practice itself laying claim to paramount authority or constitutive validity. In substantiating the point one need not invoke the shades of Śaṅkara who has placed on record his concluding reflection on the point. Says he "barring knowledge not even the faintest odour of activity can fittingly make its way into the Vedānta."<sup>1</sup> What explains the vehemence and rigour of the anti-pragmatic attitude in Śaṅkara is his strict fidelity to the spirit of Protestantism in the sphere of philosophic thinking to which he stood pledged. Indeed, his mission stood for a principle, and this he carried out by setting his face resolutely against the pragmatic abuses and aberrations of the Mimāṃsaka school—specifically, by the restoration of reason to its rightful rank in respect of a centrality of reference, and by the repatriation of the purely theoretical impulse from its subservience to practical considerations. What Śaṅkara achieved for the Vedānta—an emancipation from its age-long thralldom to mere practice or art—is symptomatic of the function of philosophy itself. But that does in no way entail a divorce of philosophy from life or practice. In fact the best way to sum up the relation of the two would be, as in the present case, to define the Vedānta or *Uttaramīmāṃsā* as the philosophy or theory of practice itself. It is a truism that life or practice precedes reflection upon, or criticism of life (*vicāra*, *mīmāṃsā*) ; or, as one Danish thinker, viz. Kierkegaard, expressed it with the force of an epigram, "We live forwards, but understand backwards."

It would be, however, an entire mis-reading of the situation to lay exclusive emphasis on this aspect of theory, and characterise Indian philosophy, least of all the Vedānta, as purely intellectual and not moral, as being a matter of outlook merely. Besides the long discredited compartmental view of the mind, which such a characterisation is clearly suggestive of, one wonders if such a charge, and that a serious one,

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<sup>1</sup> ज्ञानमेकं मुक्ता क्रियाया गन्धमात्रस्याप्यनुपपन्न इह नापपद्यते—Com. on V.S. I. 1. iv.

can have any the least pretence to scholarship, or accuracy for the matter of that, in the face of fully accredited facts regarding Indian philosophy. But the very breadth of the indictment is its redeeming feature, and so far at least as the Vedānta is concerned, it falls wide of the mark. It would have been nearer the mark to affirm what the indictment purports to deny, and on that count to frame the charge of loading the dice in favour of the moral or the practical. Complaints have often been made, and not without justice, that Indian philosophy, far from evincing a studied unconcern for the values of life, has given undue prominence to the non-logical or moral values as the shaping force and directive agency of the theoretical impulse, which alone, in the opinion of these critics, should have been the informing principle of a philosophical system. By so doing, Indian philosophy, it is contended, has so often betrayed the intellectual trust reposed in it, and made a premature compromise with the commonsense valuations of life, and thus ended by making a religion of philosophy. No less an authority than Deussen, for example, condemned, in no uncertain terms, the Sāmkhya philosophy for its having traced the philosophic *épous* to practical or utilitarian considerations and justified its *raison d'être* as a *remedium* merely of the three-fold miseries of life (as Iśvarakrishna authoritatively announces it in the very first *kārikā*).<sup>1</sup> Here, Deussen, evidently, overstates the point, and his avowed sympathy with the Vedāntic point of view may have been largely responsible for it. Doubtless it is true that problems of Indian philosophy have been considerably influenced and shaped by practical considerations, or that the roots of the philosophical impulse are discovered, on closer inspection, to be embedded deep down in the soil of life, but that fact does in no way justify an apotheosis of practice as the sole arbiter and determinant of philosophical truth. Life or practice may have indeed served as the basic foundation of all theory or

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1. दुःखत्रयमिधाताज्जिज्ञासा तदपघातके हेतौ ।



speculation in India ; but the principle, on which the different systems of philosophy have proceeded, albeit unconsciously or instinctively, is that the foundation is not to be seen in the superstructure raised thereon. Metaphors apart, the conclusion is irresistible that pragmatism as a philosophical theory, with all its inherent ambiguities and eccentricities, has hardly found favour among the more notable or advanced sections of Indian thought. In a way, no doubt, the pragmatic method has been incorporated into all the recognised systems of Indian philosophy, the *Darśanas*, so far as an acknowledged harmony (*Samvāda*) between the cognitive and volitional aspects of our experience is accepted as one of the tests, if not the sole test, of certitude (*prāmāṇya*). Indeed, the power of an element of cognition to prompt an activity in accord therewith<sup>1</sup> is one of the undiscussed, ultimate postulates of experience recognised in every system of Indian philosophy, worth the name. What affords a closer comparison is the principle of practical efficiency (*arthakriyākāritvaṃ*), which is generally accepted as one of the factors of the existent (*sat*), though seldom as the sole factor thereof. The principle in operation answers exactly to what is now commonly acknowledged to be the only admissible thesis in the pragmatic contention—not the popular and misleading version of it that we have in the proposition ‘what works is true,’ but the more reasoned and acceptable formulation of it that we have in its obverse, namely, ‘what *does not* work is *not* true’. This difference in formulation is not a matter of verbal quibbling merely, but argues a difference in principle as well—a point which hardly needs a fuller thrashing out in this context.

Accordingly, what the foregoing discussion brings into prominent relief is the utter inaptness of such epithets as ‘intellectual’ or ‘moral’ in their unqualified application to Indian philosophy. That is the standing vice of viewing Indian philosophy, as it were, *ab extra*. Roughly speaking, a man’s philosophy is determined by his vital needs, both intellectual

and moral. It is, to adapt a phrase of William James's in another reference, a 'total reaction' upon experience. In terms of scientific precision, they are but two complementary aspects of one completed circuit of consciousness. Even a tyro in psychology knows that the moral can hardly ever sit apart from the intellectual and *vice versa*, the relation between the two being one of perfect reciprocity. Thus, moral action has moral insight for its inevitable presupposition, while illuminative insight or theoretic vision is but incipient realisation of it in practice. In the hierarchy of spiritual values set up by the Vedānta, the intellectual and the moral, while enjoying perfect provincial autonomy,—a phrase more often sinned against than sinning,—do yet retain their proper ranks as inseparable partners of a co-operative concern. Opinions may differ as to the position of the Vedānta regarding the status of intellectual ideals in the issue between intrinsic and instrumental values. But there is no gainsaying the point that the Vedānta has, all through, maintained a strict correlativity between the intellectual and the moral, between the theoretical and the practical, without the suggestion of a primacy or instrumentality on the part of either.

Such are the inevitable shortcomings of advance philosophic labellings with reference to the Vedānta. What these instructive errors and half-truths force into prominence is the need of a renewed effort in search after a *ποῦστῶ* of the Vedānta—a sticking-place to which once this effort is screwed up it shall no longer fail. Neglecting differences of expression the one fundamental note that seldom fails to greet the ear of the inquisitive and the alert—rising far above the babel of scholastic confusion and divided counsels—is that of full-fledged autonomy of the Spirit. This is the message that sits enthroned in its majestic simplicity at the heart of the Vedānta, and has at all times its ready appeal for those that have ears to hear. There is hardly any serious student of the Vedānta but has felt the direct impact and edifying influence of the well-known passage of focal importance, where the mighty seer of old, bathed in the full-orbed splendour of the life-giving message,

exclaims with an invocation to the sun as the very symbol in the world without of that greatness and sublimity which is the soul's all own. The passage in question is couched in words that bear quotation here *in extenso*: "O, thou all sustaining, solitary, all-controlling sun, descended from the Lord of all creatures, do restrain and centralise all thy streaks of light that I may envisage thy blissful countenance ;—forsooth, I am the very Being that abides in thee."<sup>1</sup> Assuredly, this is a pregnant utterance of unique historic importance, charged with epoch-making significance for the history of Vedāntic thought and culture. But, clearly, more is meant here than meets the ear ; and it was reserved for the illustrious *Āchāryya*, Śaṅkara, to rise equal to the height of this great argument and to give the exact bearings of the historic pronouncement. Perfectly in keeping with the underlying spirit of the utterance, Śaṅkara has voiced in unmistakable accents what was left unvoiced, but none the less clearly suggested. Avoiding alike the aberrations, on the one hand, of devotionism which imports a self-abasement up to the liminal intensity of a 'creature-consciousness' or a 'feeling of absolute dependence,' and, on the other, of egoism which, by a misplaced emphasis, easily slips into the egotism, that is at the farthest remove from the attitude of worship, Śaṅkara brings to light the edifying implications of the cult of spiritual worship when he sums up his comments in the forceful words: 'Moreover, I do neither beg of thee in the manner of a slave or a mendicant.'<sup>2</sup>

Cryptic and negative as it is in formulation, the statement is clearly symptomatic of a profound change in outlook—a change that may truly be said to serve as a landmark in the history of Vedic culture. Figuring as the dividing-line

1 पूषन्नेकार्षेयसं सूर्यं प्राजापत्यं व्यूहं रश्मीन् समूहं ॥ तेजो यत्ते रूपं कल्याणतमं तत् पञ्चामि योऽसावसौ पुत्रवः सोऽहमस्मि ॥ १६ ॥ (ईशोपनिषत्)

2 किंच, अहं न तु त्वा भृत्यवद्याचे ।

between the R̥gvedic and the Upanishadic age, the change in question bespeaks a momentous influence in the religious history of mankind—a spiritual renaissance in ancient India that compares, not unfavourably, with the no less significant transition from the bondage of the Leviticus unto the freedom of the Gospels. What is specially noteworthy in this spiritual awakening is that there is no more the paralysing spectacle of the human worshipper being awed into submission—no more of coaxing and cajoling, petitioning and propitiating beings that are alike credited with benevolent as well as malevolent impulses. In place of stupefying admiration that thrives by working upon the baser instincts—fear of retribution and hope of reward—one has here that elevating trust in the spiritual dignity of man, which is the best ministration to religious worship. The cult of spiritual worship must necessarily be in a minor key where man shrinks into the comparatively insignificant position of a bare point on the circumference, bereft of the central importance he is by nature entitled to. On the contrary, a cosmic expansion of the soul of the worshipper, an identification of it with the spirit behind this mighty frame of nature, is the surest way to kindle those higher emotions and aspirations that possess the specific flavour of worship. Such is, indeed, the meanings, plain and implied, of a ‘free man’s worship’—a phrase which by a mere abuse of language is made to typify, as in Russell, the uninspiring outlook of ‘a weary but unyielding Atlas’ with its faith pinned to the gospel of ‘unyielding despair.’<sup>1</sup> But, in point of fact, the gospel of ‘unyielding despair,’—if such there be one at all,—should be more fittingly styled the gospel of the bondsman rather than of the free man. It may have an ‘austere beauty’ to recommend itself; but its austerity turns out, on closer inspection, to be mere ‘sham heroism,’ and its beauty only a borrowed glory. Indeed, the gospel of ‘unyielding despair’ is but a melancholy mimicry of what man has, during the ages past, understood

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<sup>1</sup> Russell, *Mysticism and Logic and Other Essays*, p. 57.

by religious faith and worship. For, what is exactly missing here is that Promethean spark that can, by a miracle, as it were, transform the gospel of 'unyielding despair' into an evangel of elevating hope—a hope that has potency enough to re-create itself out of its own wreck. The free man, according to Śaṅkara does not confess to an indigence of this kind. He does not appear as one, craving a kind condescension but as one asserting his birth-right with a neophyte's fervour and vehemence. This is what invests his pronouncement with an authority and importance all its own. It is all the more important in view of the complete change of front it evinces in the history of Vedic thought and culture. "Śaṅkara presents to us," as also observes Prof. Rādhākṛishnan,<sup>1</sup> "the true ideal of philosophy, which is not, so much knowledge as wisdom, not so much logical learning as spiritual freedom." It is, however, a freedom that does not come within the range of the cheap criticism, namely, that it means nothing more than that there is freedom outside the prison-house—a gospel that 'comforts while it mocks' those that lie imprisoned. It is, forsooth, a freedom that broods 'like the day, a master o'er a slave, A presence which is not to be put by'—a freedom that greets even those brows that languish behind the prison-bars, provided they would enter into a conscious participation in a birth-right that is eternally theirs. The orient light that once shone forth still shines undimmed with the passage of time that makes history. And the voice that once spoke, hushed as it is to eternal silence, still cries out from its own ashes: "Seek ye first this autonomy of the Spirit and then all else shall be added unto you"!

It is customary for every writer of a treatise on Vedānta philosophy to dwell at length on the etymological as well as the conventional meaning of the term 'Vedānta.' While it is true that no departure need be made in the present case from what looks like an established tradition, it is instructive to note that much ingenuity has been, and can be, displayed in this direction. There is hardly any room for ingenuity in the mechanical carrying out of the meaning that readily follows

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<sup>1</sup> Indian Philosophy, Vol. II. p. 447.

from the etymology of the term 'Vedānta' (= 'Veda' + 'anta,' a compound of the two component words yielding by euphonic combination the term 'Vedānta' and meaning literally 'the end of the Vedas'). The literal rendering of the term 'Vedānta' has thus an obvious reference to the body of doctrines set forth in the concluding sections of the Vedas, otherwise known as the *Upanishads*. This, its primary reference is staked, however, not merely upon the external fact of its position or grouping, but based on internal evidences of a growing maturation, a continuous development of thought from the earlier to the final part of the Vedas. Having regard to these last considerations, one would be justified in claiming a wider latitude than what is strictly sanctioned by a literal interpretation of the phrase 'end of the Vedas.' It is but common knowledge that the engrossing concern of the Vedas is with ritualistic practices and sacrificial cults—of prayer and worship, of penance and propitiation and the like performances of everyday life. With the gradual abandonment of the nomadic existence of our Vedic ancestor, and the steady evolution of a natural, a social, and a cultural *milieu*, there was brought into active play the theoretical impulse which had been engulfed in the satisfaction of the brute necessities. It is only illustrative of a universally accredited fact of human history that life or practice always anticipates a criticism or theory thereof, and as a question of principle it has its justification *a priori*. What is the more important consideration here is that the chronological priority in question has a logical counterpart in reality and is no mere freak of historical accidents. It is instructive to compare the parallel change of emphasis that came about—in due course but for different reasons—from the merely chronological and etymological meaning of the Aristotelian *μετὰ τὰ φυσικά* ("after the physics") to the logical and conventional sense invariably associated with the term 'metaphysics' as understood at the present day. Accordingly, those who swear by the exclusively chronological aspect in the meaning of the term 'Vedānta' miss entirely the deeper, the more important, that is to say, the dynamic element in the fullness of its meaning.

What lends countenance to the much-needed re-orientation of the whole, and concentration on this aspect of the meaning, is the light that proceeds from the discovery of a radical affinity and perfect equivalence of meaning between 'the Sanskrit word 'anta' and its English counterpart 'end' in the rendering of the term 'Vedānta' as the 'end of the Vedas.' Starting alike from the meaning of a 'last or extreme point' that readily follows from their common root, and following the dynamics of a meaning-particle through a variety of kindred and parallel meanings, the two converge towards what seems to be of central importance for both—namely the 'aim, purpose or essence' as the moving spirit of the whole revealing itself by stages in a process, without surrendering its own integrity.

Indeed, the category of End, construed philosophically, means nothing but the insight that the end is not the final stage of a process that merely succeeds or supersedes its predecessors, but that it is the informing spirit of the whole, distilled, as it were, into its successive phases, all and sundry. It is by a figure of speech, therefore, that the End or the moving spirit of the whole comes to signify the end or limiting point ; for, it is only in the last term that is adequately revealed the nature of the principle which is operative throughout. In other words, the End is essentially a dynamic category ; accordingly, every phase in a process of growth or development is to be studied as much in the light of the whole process, as in that of its last term. Thus, the End, truly viewed, is a matter of what may be called progressive, and not merely catastrophic attainment—a matter of progressive realisation in the process as a whole and not merely one of substantive existence descending as a *finale* on a sphere apparently complete by itself. Hence, the End in its interpretative function is as much operative at the very start or beginning as at the *de facto* end of anything. Verily, the first shall be the last and the last shall be the first ! Thus alone is wisdom justified of all philosophical explanation which, in doing strict justice to the category of End, must necessarily look to the end that serves in the double capacity of the last part or term as well as the drive or *nisus* of the whole. This

is precisely what the Aristotelian idea of *τέλος* or End imports on a judicious rendering of it. Therefore, it is not merely by a rhetorical device but by close-knit arguments that is secured the larger and more important sense of 'end' in the phrase 'the end of the Vedas.' Such is unmistakably the drift of the statement that occurs in one of the comparatively obscure Upanishads, called the *Muktikopanishad*, where Rāma-chandra, as the very embodiment of the Supreme Spirit, is represented in the rôle of the redeemer, inculcating on his devoted attendant, the *Māruti*, the gospel of redemption in words to the following effect: "A great multitude of Vedas proceeded as so many exhalations from me, the all-pervasive being; verily like oil in the sesamum-seeds, the Vedānta is securely lodged in the Veda."<sup>1</sup> The analogy that the statement in question draws upon in this regard is at once forceful and instructive; it is clearly illustrative of the fuller meaning of the word 'end' on which such vital issues are staked. Hence, it may be safely asserted that the Vedānta is the main objective and final aim, the cream and essence, the guiding spirit and shaping force,—in a word, the *nisus formativus* of the Vedas.

That is one way of settling the connotation of the "Vedānta"—so far as it is possible to do by way of a judicious concentration on the derivative meaning of the term 'Vedānta'. It may not have confessedly carried us very far, but it has most certainly succeeded in the recovery of some stable ground or halting station for further advance in this direction—in the recovery, namely, of that dynamic sense of the term 'Vedānta' which was elicited in the course of our foregoing enquiry. The problem that now stares us in the face is that of a corresponding uncertainty in respect of what the Vedānta denotes or directly stands for. In view of the distracting varieties of commentaries—*Sūtras*, *Kārikās*, *Bhāshyas*, *Anubhāshyas*, *Vārttikas*, *Vṛttis*,

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1 निश्चासभूता मे विश्वीर्वेदा जाताः सुविस्तराः ।

तिलेषु तैलवद्दे वेदानाः सुप्रतिष्ठिताः ॥—Verse IX.



*Tikās*, *Sāras*, *Samgrahas* and the like,—alike claiming to constitute the literature of the Vedānta, a solution of this problem is all the more imperative. Now, the Vedānta, as the age-long tradition would have it, refers primarily to the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavadgītā*, and the *Brahmasūtras* (otherwise known as the *Vedāntasūtras* or *Śārīrakasūtras*, from the fact of their dealing with the embodied self or spirit) constituting in point of their authoritativeness what may be called the 'canon' of the Vedānta. It is this accredited trio that has acquired the designation of 'the three institutes of the Vedānta' (*prasthānatrayam*)—the *Upanishads* marking the institute of revealed knowledge (*Śrutiprasthānam*), the *Bhagavadgītā*, that of traditional knowledge (*Smṛtiprasthānam*) and the *Brahmasūtras* that of philosophical knowledge (*Nyāyaprasthānam*). The relation that subsists between these three *prasthānas* is one of organic interdependence yielding a perfect concord or harmony among the constituents of the Vedānta. But a rift in the lute is inevitable, if we choose to stress one or the other of the two of these—the *Upanishads* and the *Brahmasūtras*—in their competing for recognition as the Vedānta *par excellence*. Accordingly, in sponsoring the view that the *Vedāntasūtras* 'form the original authoritative work of the Vedānta', one would be only introducing an unhappy breach into the *entente cordiale* and abetting a domestic quarrel among the members of the otherwise happy family, and thus undermining the family solidarity. Nor is it a view that can stand a closer scrutiny. The sole *raison d'être* of the *Sūtras* in question consists, as Śaṅkara clearly puts it, in threading together the flower-like texts of the Vedānta (*Vedāntavākyakusumgrathanārthatvāt sūtrāṇām*),<sup>1</sup> these being no other than the texts of the *Upanishads* (*upanishadvākyas*). Developing the point of this analogy, one would be justified in contending that the *sūtras*, taken by themselves, have as much reality or substantiality, as the rosary has apart from the beads, or varying the analogy a little, the *sūtras* by themselves would be more or less in the position of a

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<sup>1</sup> Com. on V.S. I. 1. i.

soul without a body as its manifesting agency. Those who make an apotheosis of the *sūtras* would be prepared even for that contingency, but surely such a problematic functioning of the disembodied soul is a thing on which the Psychical Research Society has yet to impress its seal of authority. Even at the most modest computation, the minimum requirement of the case would be a transmissive organ, such as the human brain. Accordingly, the view that the Vedānta philosophy is the philosophy of the *Brahmasūtras* as its only authoritative source-book appears to be an initial misdirection, making the designation in the end a misnomer merely. It has neither the sanction of sane criticism nor of authoritative tradition. On the contrary the view sponsored by *Āchāryya Sadānanda* in his *Vedāntasāra* appears to be at once the most reasonable and authoritative pronouncement on this debatable issue. To quote his very words, "it is, forsooth, the *Upanishad* that is the measure or authoritative source-book of the Vedānta, the *Śārīrakasūtras* standing in a complementary or instrumental relation thereto."<sup>1</sup> Thus, it may be safely concluded that the term 'Vedānta,' in its primary or substantive sense, stands for the *Upanishads*, and, in its secondary or transitive application for the *Śārīrakasūtras*.

Confessedly, it is not a conclusion universally accepted. Some are evidently in favour of giving an unlimited range to the term 'Vedānta'—including within its scope every blessed commentary and annotation, manual or monograph on the main findings of the Vedānta. Some, again, *e.g.*, *Brahmānanda Saraswatī*, more moderate in their claims, pick and choose from among the vast literature on the subject and canonize the following five as they appeared more or less in apostolic succession: "The *Śārīraka Mimāṃsā* in its four divisions (by *Bādarāyaṇa*), commentary or *Bhāṣya* on it (by *Śaṅkara*), a gloss on it, again, (named *Bhāmati*) by *Vācaspati*miśra,

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1 -वेदान्तो नामोपनिषत्प्रमाणं तदुपकारीणि शरीरकसूत्रादीनि च ।

a commentary (on *Bhāmūti* again) called *Kalpātara* (by Amalananda Yati) and finally, a commentary (on the last-named) called *Kalpātara-parimāla* by Apyayadīkshita,—as constituting in their ensemble the *Vedāntaśāstra*.<sup>1</sup> It is here that the need of the *sūtra* makes itself acutely felt, and its importance recognised. Like the proverbial Ariadne's thread, the *sūtras* of Indian thought provide a way of escape from the inevitable *impasse* to which one is driven in the bewildering mazes of commentaries and glossary, *bhāṣyas* and *tīkāś*, and the like. As is well known, the *sūtra* form, proceeding upon the maxim that brevity is the soul of wit has pursued with relentless consistency this ideal of abbreviation, and exercised such a rigorous economy in its formulation as would come readily within the purview of the classic caricature of the grammarian 'as rejoicing in the economy of half a short vowel as much as he does on the birth of a son to him.' As a matter of fact the *sūtra* has been defined as 'a short aphorism of minimum possible words, of unambiguous meaning, of the nature of epitome, possessing omniformity, unbroken continuity and flawlessness'.<sup>2</sup> Although it is with a variant of the language employed here that the commonly accepted definition of *sūtra* quoted by Vācaspati Miśra occurs in the *Bhāmūti*,<sup>3</sup> the construction that he puts upon the word is eminently suggestive and important. "The *sūtra* is so called" writes Vācaspati "because of its multivocal character."<sup>4</sup>

It is exactly here that lie at once the strength and weakness of the *sūtra*. The extreme terseness of the *sūtras* which spells.

1 "वेदान्तशास्त्रेति शारीरकमीमांसा चतुर्ध्यायोतदभाष्यतदीयटीकाचस्यत्यतदीयटीकाकल्पतदतदीयटीकापरिमलरूपग्रन्थपञ्चकैत्यर्थः" ।

2 स्वल्पाक्षरमसन्दिग्धसारवच्चिन्तितमुल्लम् ।

असोभनमवयव' च स्वं सूत्रविदो विदुः ॥

3 लघूनि सूचितार्थानि स्वल्पाक्षरपदानि च ।

सर्वतः सारभूतानि स्वाध्याद्गुरुर्नोषिचः ॥

एवञ्च वद्वर्थसूचनायवति ।

their congenital weakness has its own historic justification. In the absence of present-day printing facilities, the entire mnemonic (*i.e.* *sūtra*) literature that had to be improvised under the controlling lead of oral tradition, could not but invoke a rigidly compact form despite the risk of obscurity and ambiguity. The same enforced necessity of abbreviation that engenders this anæmic helpless state of the *sūtras*, invents a remedy in the prescript of periodical infusion of new blood from concrete flesh-and-blood existence of commentaries and scholia. Thus embodied and vitalized the *sūtras* prove to be a tower of strength and fountain-head of inspiration for the commentaries with which they appear in constant conjunction—by providing a mariner's compass to the individual commentators who might otherwise navigate in an uncharted sea without being ever brought to definite moorings. Hence, it is not merely from an historic necessity that the *sūtras* came into being, but the recognition of their need proceeds from a principle. They are mainly designed to arrest the rampant growth of unfettered free thinking (*nirāṅkuṣatarkaḥ*) that leads nowhere, and to stake out the limits beyond which such free thinking may not stray. That does not mean that the *sūtras* by themselves constitute the repository of all wisdom, dispensing with the necessity of individual commentaries. Adapting the words of an historian of European philosophy, one can observe that the *sūtras* “do not think themselves, but are thought by living spirits, which are something other and better than mere thought-machines—by spirits who live these thoughts, who fill them with personal warmth and passionately defend them.” In fact every articulate system of philosophic thought has a well-marked individuality ; and it is the individuality of a thinker's ‘vision,’ *Weltanschauung* or *darśanam*, meaning among others an intuition of the whole, that counts after all in a philosophical rendering of the world. There is, admittedly, in this recognition of the individuality of a philosophic thinker, the danger of the reign of a lawless individualism in the sphere of philosophic thinking. The remedy, however, lies not in obliterating or discounting altogether the individuality of the

thinker or commentator, but in sublimating art<sup>1</sup> maintaining it at a higher level. The way to achieve this lies in an advance through conquest of selfish prejudice or bias, if any, to that disinterested intellectual curiosity which alone can appropriate or assimilate truth. That is why, among other pre-requisites, the renunciation of all self-centred interests or apathy towards enjoyments of the fruits of one's actions, whether here on earth or hereafter in the life to come (*ihāmutraphalabhogavirāgaḥ*)<sup>1</sup> is demanded of the student of the Vedānta. The change thus wrought in the soul of the philosophic inquirer bears testimony to the 'expulsive power of a higher affection.' In the absence of such higher affection or mastering enthusiasm for truth, there will spring up distracting varieties of polemics leading men astray from the pursuit of truth. Such a mishap was foreshadowed by Śaṅkara and the necessary safeguard provided for. "If men's inclinations," as he clearly laid down, "were not regulated, establishment of truth would be impossible on account of the endless diversity in their power of apprehension."<sup>2</sup>

The strength or efficacy of the *sūtras* thus consists in its prescript of a chartered freedom as against the possible abuse or license of free thinking. The *sūtra* form has the effect of pruning away the rapid accretion of rival commentaries and expositions, destitute of a survival-value. The temperamental bias of the Oriental mind against chronicling or conserving historical data or individual peculiarities or biographical details explains this natural predilection for the *sūtra* form. In a wider reference the same tendency expresses itself in the instinctive preference not for personal, but corporate, immortality. The *sūtras* accordingly, are professedly conservative—illustrating in a limited manner what we understand by 'conservation of values.' But it is this very conservatism that has ensured the historic continuity and perpetuity of the doctrines of a

1 इहामुत्रफलभोगविरागः ।

2 कस्यचित् कश्चित् पक्षपाते सति पुरुषमतिवैश्वरूप्येण तत्त्वान्वयस्थानप्रसंगात् ।

particular school in defiance of the spoil of ages. "For the Western philosopher," as writes<sup>1</sup> Dr. Urquhart with the added authority of one representing Western philosophy, "it is true that our little systems have their day and cease to be" whereas "in the Vedānta, as well as in other Indian philosophies, we may notice a remarkable unity of development more closely knit than in Western philosophy." Indeed, the *élan vital* of Indian thought has from time immemorial carried forward the undying past into the living present which it interpenetrates, and thus, pressing on the frontiers of the unknown, created fresh channels of thought. Viewed thus the *sūtra* form stands as the very symbol or formula of 'creative evolution.' That seems to be also the drift of Prof. Rādhākṛishnan's suggestive phrase—"the constructive conservatism of Indian thought." This innate conservatism of Indian thought,—which is symbolised by the *sūtra*,—with its retrospective outlook towards antecedent conditions, does not, however, land us in sheer emptiness. The *sūtra* does not leave us, in the end, with a barren, abstract, colourless universal that rides roughshod over the particular. It is the universal in the particular and the particular as embosomed in the universal—or, to use the oft-repeated phrase 'the concrete universal'—that is not merely the 'secret' of Hegel, but the 'open conspiracy' of the Real. The white light, that is apparently colourless, reveals itself on spectral analysis to be a harmonious blend of variegated colours. So does the *sūtra* justify its essential character as *viśvatomukham* emulating, in capacity and function, a myriad-minded personality. That is why the towering figures in the arena of Indian philosophy announce themselves as the mere exegetes or commentators (*bhāṣyakāras*) on the original *sūtras* and redeem, with the strictest fidelity, their initial pledge at every stage of their career, without surrendering in the least their rights of private judgment (*vicāra* or *mīmāṃsā*) or fettering their decision in any way. In the words of a distinguished Vedāntic scholar "exegetical interpretation here

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<sup>1</sup> *The Vedānta and Modern Thought*, p. 9.

inevitably shades off into philosophic construction ; and this need not involve any intellectual dishonesty.”<sup>1</sup> This is exactly the plea with which Śaṅkara enters upon his career. “For this reason” says he “by way of enquiring into Brahman there is being undertaken an exegesis of the Vedānta texts, having for its materials arguments conformable thereto, and for its final end beatitude” (*tasmād brahmajijnāsoḥpanyāsa mukhena vedānta vākya-mīmāṃsā tadavirodhitatarkopakaraṇā nihśreyasa prajayā prastūyate*).<sup>2</sup> If the vocation of the philosopher is to be, in the language of Plato, “a spectator of all time and all existence,” he must have the eye to discern in time “the moving image of eternity.” This clearly reveals an attempt to take time seriously ; and it is with reference to the *sūtras* in their constant conjunction with *bhāṣyās* or commentaries, that the philosophers of the Vedānta school have achieved a much-needed solution of the standing conflict between the timeless or unhistorical and the temporal or historical character of truths. If truths ‘wake to perish never,’ neither antiquity nor modernity can either add to, or detract from the validity of these. Mr. Bertrand Russell’s dictum that the recognition of the unimportance of time is the one gateway of wisdom surely has its force in this regard. Accordingly, the feverish passion for antiquity, matched by an equally frenzied zeal for a comparative recency, that is generally displayed by scholars, both in the East and in the West, with regard to the historic emergence of Indian philosophy, and the *Vedānta sūtras* in particular, seems to be altogether uncalled for, and what is more to the point, unphilosophical. What the *sūtras* seek to emphasize is just this interplay of timelessness as well as historicity of truths—this dance of eternity before the footlights of time—and the guarantee that all our finite strivings after truth survive in the *sūtra*, ‘when eternity affirms the conception

<sup>1</sup> K. C. Bhaṭṭācāryya, *Studies in Vedantism*, Introduction.

<sup>2</sup> तस्माद्ब्रह्मजिज्ञासोपन्यासमुखेन वेदान्तवाक्यमीमांसा तदविरोधिततर्कोपकरणानिःश्रेयसप्रयोजनाप्रस्तूयते ।

<sup>2</sup> Com. on *Vedānta Sūtras*, I. 1. i.

of an hour.' The mission of the *sūtras* is to authenticate the fact of the immemorial past interpenetrating, and energising the present and thus to justify the double rôle in which truths appear—ever constant, ever new. The uniformity or identity in question is more akin to the self-identity of a 'continuant' than to the bare identity of a 'recurrent' character, to adopt the phraseology popularised by Mr. Johnson in his framing of the issue concerning universality. In point of fact, all historically conditioned systems of philosophy, Indian or European,—whether determined by the *sūtras* or otherwise—appear to the discerning student to be, not so many thoughts, but rhythms in thinking. Nothing serves as a more apt illustration of the case than the analogy of the Indian *rāga* with its structural invariability as conjoined to an infinite variety in composition.<sup>1</sup>

In an intelligent survey of Indian thought, specifically, of Vedānta philosophy, two extremes are to be avoided. In the first place, in a region where philosophic construction has invariably ushered itself into existence by way of exegesis or scholium, the selection of a faithful and reliable commentator is too apt to become a question of first rate importance and initial settlement. But such selection, in spite of allowances being made for temperamental bias, for personal equation and the like, should never be made to wear the appearance of individual choice or arbitrary preference. When, for example, a statement is made to the effect that 'the philosophy of Śankara.....is the Vedānta *par excellence*,'<sup>2</sup> such advance labelling of the Vedānta comes perilously near the *ipse dixit* of a dogmatist or propagandist. Admittedly there is some force in the contention that one is a born Śaṅkarite or a born Rāmānujist, just as one is a born Platonist or a born Aristotelian. Nor need it be disputed altogether that a philosophic creed has, after all, its roots not so much in intellectual satisfaction as in the demands of the emotional and volitional

<sup>1</sup> Vide Dr. Urquhart, *The Vedānta and Modern Thought*, p. 10, f.n.

<sup>2</sup> P. N. Sen, *Philosophy of the Vedānta*, p. 6.



sides of a man's nature. But, then, in a case like this no question of preferential treatment does or need arise. Commentators of the *Vedāntasūtras* there have been—and their number is a legion—such as Śrīkantha, Bhāskara, Rāmāṇja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, and Baladeva among others—who have, by adopting a policy of pick-and-choose, of stressing a point here and dropping a point there, of straining and twisting the resources of logic, sought to cater to demands that are extra-philosophical and thus win the day. *But the great never stoop to conquer.* They develop their peculiar thesis with a vertical and unrelenting consistency, regardless of the consequences such a procedure might have on collateral issues. The authoritativeness of any of these commentaries on the *Vedāntasūtras* is not to be judged by the greatest common measure of agreement it affords among its rivals. The greatness of Śaṅkara, at least, does not lie there. He overrides others by the sheer force of his greatness—by the compelling greatness, in particular, of his logic of absolutism, or what is the same thing, his logic of comprehension. The whole host of other commentators exhibit in their interpretation what may be called thoughts of arrested development; and whether of the form of qualified monism (*viśiṣṭādvaita*) or of dualism (*dvaita*), they all point, by force of their unconscious logic to *Advaita-Vedānta* of the Śaṅkarite type as their natural culmination. They are the people who make a premature compromise with findings that are not, in any sense, far-reaching or of foundational importance, and thus come under the category of these that have not felt, the drive or 'the arduousness of reality.' Indeed, there is nothing sacrosanct about any commentary, however august be the name associated with it as its author. Its claims to supremacy, if there be any, must be heard before the bar of individual reason; for, in the republic of the Vedānta, we recognise no alien government except that of integral Experience as a self-legislative authority. From Authority to Freedom, from *Śruti* to *Anubhūti*, from Revelation to Experience in its integrity and back again—that is the systole and diastole of the life of the Vedānta. As it has been

wisely observed,<sup>1</sup> the scriptural texts, such as those of the *Upanishads* are to be endlessly explained by the commentary of individual lives, and as placed in such a context, they acquire an individual meaning, awaiting, as it were, for their confirmation, the special testimony of each one of us. Thus is evidently secured that universality of appeal which the *Upanishads* can reasonably claim for themselves.

The other extreme to be avoided in a systematic rendering of the Vedānta, and of Indian thought in general, is that intemperate passion for historical scholarship which, instead of keeping within the legitimate bounds of Indology has invaded the domain of Indian philosophy. The historical treatment of the problems of Indian Philosophy is too apt to succumb to this temptation, and thus signally fail of its purpose, forfeiting eventually its title to this designation. In the matter of compiling a History of Philosophy, mere historical and even philological scholarship have undoubtedly their respective use. But they are made grotesque, if they are thrust into the forefront and made to do the duty of what a philosophic evolution of thought-types primarily stands for. In a History of Philosophy it is not merely facts and events that we look for, but the underlying meaning and import of these, as they appear in their historic succession. The Baconian comparison of the respective functions of the 'ant' and the 'bee' has not evidently lost its force for us even to-day. Indeed, accumulation of facts is one thing, and illumination quite another; where many are the accumulators, only a few are torch-bearers. If, the proverbially good-souled (?) ass, that would usually be employed to carry the fuel with which fire was lighted, were suddenly to take it into his head in a fit of contagious logic, that he was the author and source of all illumination, he would, in spite of his specious argument from agreement in presence and in absence, be held up to ridicule. Surely, the benevolent ass—may his tribe increase!—has rendered himself indispensable to us; but he has to be reminded pretty often of his station

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<sup>1</sup> For example by Dr. Tagore in the Introduction to his '*Sādhana*'.

in life and the duties incidental thereto. It is Hegel, the typical philosopher of the Restoration, who has laid down in the clearest possible manner what he conceives to be the main objective of a History of Philosophy in the 'Introduction' to his own 'History of Philosophy.' Philosophy, as it has been well said, is largely a question of proportion; and it is re-assuring to note that Hegel, steeped as he was in the historical *Weltanschauung* with its pronounced leanings towards a philosophico-historical necessity, saw things in their proper perspective when he observed that "in thought, and particularly in speculative thought, comprehension means something quite different from understanding the grammatical sense of the words alone, and also from understanding them in the region of ordinary conception only."<sup>1</sup> 'The authors of such histories' as are lacking in this 'comprehension' or 'knowledge of the matter itself about which so much ado has been made,' may, in Hegel's opinion, 'be compared to animals which have listened to all the tones in some music, but to whose senses the unison, the harmony of their tones, has not penetrated.'<sup>2</sup>

To the ends of a systematic study of the Vedānta, such as is ours, the need and importance of 'comprehension,' in its philosophic sense, can not possibly be overrated. It is all the more imperative in view of the fact that we have not, with rare exceptions, learnt the art of pressing historical scholarship into the service of a philosophical study. In fact, there is hardly any consensus of opinions among workers in this field as to the scope and function of such scholarship, and the result is that through sheer loss of perspective we cannot see the wood for the trees. But, then, we must remember that it is we who, in our perversity, first raise the dust, and then complain that we cannot see. A systematic study of the Vedānta is, therefore, our rallying-point; all other labellings and constructions of it are a matter of words only. *Systems*,

<sup>1</sup> *History of Philosophy* (trans. E. S. Haldane), Vol. I, p. xvi.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

it is true, have had their day ; but a *systematic* study of the Vedānta is not 'Time's fool' nor has it, in any way, outlived its use. It may yet be suffered to enjoy the round of its days ere the inevitable doom falls on it pitiless and dark. Even then it may not be found impossible to explore a resting-place for it in the Valhalla of the Vedānta. So runs also the prophetic assurance :

“What entered into thee

*That* was, is, and shall be

Time's wheel runs back or stops : Potter and clay endure.”

## LECTURE II.

### THE VEDĀNTA IN THE MAKING.

The genetic study of the Vedānta in its historical affiliations unmistakably points to the hymns of the Ṛgveda as containing the germinal beginnings of the Vedānta. Although there is scarcely to be found a more sympathetic expositor of the hymns of the Ṛgveda than Max Müller, his characterisation of the Ṛgveda as 'the babbling of child-humanity', when read out of its context, may appear to have made no allowances for all the crudity and immaturity that must necessarily appertain to all embryonic existences in a state of gestation. One need not go the whole length with the poet in acclaiming the child as 'the best philosopher', 'Mighty Prophet' or 'Seer blest'; but with a little exercise of sympathetic imagination, one might discern in this so-called 'babbling' the primeval utterance of those truths 'which we are toiling all our lives to find'. It is no wonder, then, that the average critic in whom this gift of sympathetic understanding is conspicuous by its absence will discover in the Ṛgveda nothing but the symptoms of a low and degenerate type of civilisation—in which the entire gamut of animism, spiritism, ancestor-worship, and the like is traversed, along with the constant concomitance of a prevailing polytheism, bringing in their train the worst form of sacerdotalism and priestly tyranny. In spite of a child-like naïveté characterising most of the prayers, a sunny pagan temperament, breathing a light-hearted joyousness in all its utterances, and the somewhat riotous fantasy displayed in the creation of gods, the hymns of the Ṛgveda do, for the most part, reveal a philosophical frame of mind in 'those obstinate questionings of sense and outward things' that sooner or later press upon the human mind, alike in the history of the individual and that of the race. If doubt, or what is the same thing, wonder in the Platonic sense, is to be regarded everywhere as the

parent of philosophy, such a philosophic doubt makes its penetrative appeal in and through that famous 'Hymn to the Unknown God'<sup>1</sup> which may, with strict justice, be taken to be symptomatic of the whole spirit of the Ṛgveda. Distracted by innumerable calls on his allegiance to the gods of the Vedic pantheon, the Ṛgvedic thinker in a mood of sceptical despair, has insistently harped on the strain:—"कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम" "to what God shall we offer our oblation?"<sup>2</sup> One need not be anxious for a defence of philosophic doubt expressed herein; for, it has its logical as well as historical justification. It is not that doubt which paralyses all inquiry at the very start; but is, strictly speaking, a methodological doubt, which, as the indispensable prelude to all inquiry, has everywhere proved so fruitful in the service of a philosophic construction. Viewed in its historical perspective, it stands at the cross-ways of two competing trends of thought. It heralds on the one hand 'the twilight of the gods,' and on the other the dawning of a new era of philosophic earnestness which at once revealed the main drift and crowning achievement of Ṛgvedic speculation. Verily, 'the owl of Minerva takes its flight only when the shades of night are gathering.' It is not, assuredly, a doubtful adventure or excursion of the intellect, but is in itself the attainment of a stable ground on the way to further advance along this line. If the sole claim of Thales to be reckoned the first philosopher on the soil of Europe consists, not ostensibly in his enunciation of 'water' to be the primordial source or matrix of all things, but in the honest attempt that he made to trace, in his own crude way, the diversity of our experience to a unitary principle, in flagrant opposition to the explanations of current polytheism, then surely the effort after philosophic comprehension that is made in this very Hymn entitles its author to a more respectful consideration. Take, for example, the beautiful line—"यस्य

<sup>1</sup> The phrase 'unknown God' is to be divested, however, of the Pauline associations as found in the Acts.

<sup>2</sup> *Ṛg Veda*, x, 121.

ह्यावाचतं यस्य मृत्युः” “(the being) whose shadow is ‘immortality and mortality (i.e., deity and humanity)’”—which impresses as much by the elegance of its expression as by the depth of its insight ; and we cannot help admiring the first fruits of the effort at comprehension. Thus, the sceptical mood that is characteristic of some of the later hymns of the Ṛgveda does not land us in bare negation, but has some solid achievement to its credit. Even Prof. Keith who can never be accused of any the least partiality for Indian philosophy in general, and for Ṛgveda in particular, is not slow to acknowledge the value of this achievement. Premising that ‘philosophy in India shows its beginnings as often in the expression of scepticism’ [as in its ‘earliest poetry’], he proceeds to observe that ‘the positive side of the tendency of the Ṛgveda to dissatisfaction with the gods of tradition is to be seen in the assertion of the unity of the gods and of the world. When all is said and done this is the one important contribution of the Ṛgveda to the philosophy of India. It asserts as a norm for the future development of that thought the effort to grasp more concretely and definitely the unity, which it asserts as a fact, but which it does not justify or explain in detail.’<sup>1</sup>

The prolific myth-making of the Ṛgveda, again, is made a target of attack by its critics. For better or for worse the first flutter of the new-fledged philosophic impulse on the Indian soil, clothed itself in poetry of unending charm, with an abundance of myths, as the machinery just meant for the purpose, standing to the credit of a fertile imagination or creative phantasy, native to the soil. This characteristic of early Indian speculation, by no means uncommon in the history of speculative thought in other lands, attests *inter alia* the truth of Vico’s dictum that ‘poetry is the first operation of the human mind’. It is not merely on that account that the poetic or the mythological garb of ‘the earliest poetry of India’ which ‘already contains many traces of the essential character of the

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<sup>1</sup> *The Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upanishads*, pp. 433, 434.

philosophy of India<sup>1</sup> is to be justified. 'In nothing indeed' as we have it on Prof. Keith's authority 'does the continuity of Indian life show itself more strikingly than this: the gods of India change, but the alteration of the higher thought is far less marked'.<sup>2</sup> Nor one need be apologetic at all for the poetic or mythical representation of philosophical truths as systematically carried out in the R̥gveda. Even the purists among dialecticians, while labelling the myths of Plato as mere lacunæ or lapses in his otherwise rigorous logic, have yet to acknowledge that there is in all of these a rich kernel of truth concealed under what is mere myth. The relation of the two, viewed in a time-perspective, may be pithily expressed by saying that the myth is but truth in the making. But there is no denying the fact that a poetic or mythical representation of philosophical doctrines at the present day would at once be tabooed as being a matter of historical anachronism. Even Plato refers in the *Republic*<sup>3</sup> to an 'old feud between poetry and philosophy' and condones the 'noble untruth' of poetry and the imitative arts in general, in so far as they tend to lead one astray from the strict pursuit of truth. The so-called 'feud' to which he refers is an interesting study in psycho-analysis. It is only an objectification of a crisis in his mental history precipitated by a growing conflict between the two fundamental tendencies of his nature. For, it is no mere exaggeration to say that Plato was primarily and temperamentally a poet, but a philosopher by profession. However paradoxical it might sound, it is not so in point of fact; and a deeper reading in Plato is sure to confirm this analysis. When, therefore, he was ordaining the exile of the poets from the ideal republic, he did not know—such is the irony of the situation—that he was signing the warrant of his own extradition from the Ideal State. Indeed, much of the authority that attaches to Plato's pro-

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1 Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upanishads*,

p. 433.

2 *Ibid.*

3 Book X.



nouncements on the 'first truths' is due to the dual rôle in which he appears, and the double voice with which he speaks. If, as the poet Yeats believes, 'whatever of philosophy has been made poetry is alone permanent', there could be found no more apt illustration of the point than in the case of Plato. As a matter of fact, a philosophic doctrine, in order to insure its perpetuity, must see that it is integral to a 'vision' or synoptic view of the whole ; then and then only can it hope to survive, as does for Browning's melodist 'the passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky'.<sup>1</sup> Truly it is Plato, the poet, that conceived or had the vision of a world of Ideas or archetypal Forms ; it is Plato, the philosopher that sought to justify the vision with reference to the things of sensible experience. And that is exactly the reason why the Platonic vision of a world of Ideas has come to stay as a classical inheritance of mankind, while his teachings about 'fixed stars' or 'future retribution' have become matters of antiquarian research. But the issue is not merely staked on accidents of history ; it is one involving a question of principle. The principle in question is no other than the one underlying Wordsworth's description of poetry, and that in sober prose, as 'the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge.' There are many who would stoutly refuse to be convinced by an *ipse dixit* of this kind. But they might as well, without dogmatising, reckon with the fact that truth does not come to us on the crutches of dialectic, but is seized in a moment of rapt contemplation by reason in its synthetic activity, or what is the same thing by 'imagination' in the 'Wordsworthian sense, which is but 'reason in its most exalted mood.' Thus, the poetic or the mythical presentation of the hymns of the R̥gveda has *prima facie* nothing to invalidate their truth-claim.

It would be, however, carrying things too far to accept the myths, all and sundry, as bearers of deep philosophic import, and to read into the hymns, individually, a meaning which, on the strength of historic as well as textual criticism,

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<sup>1</sup> Abt Vogler.

does not appear to be at all plausible. Such is more or less the procedure of an accredited exponent of the Advaita-Vedānta school in recent times,<sup>1</sup> so far as he discredits the so-called plurality of the Vedic deities accepted on the basis of their different functions and discerns in the Ṛgveda, from the very first hymn unto the last, a sustained message of unity, of a clear cut *Advaitism*. By way of substantiating his *bona fides*, he literally selects the well-known opening hymn of the Ṛgveda<sup>2</sup>:—"I glorify *Agni*, the high-priest of the sacrifice, the divine, the ministrant, who presents the oblation (to the gods) and is the possessor of great wealth." It is not on this solitary peg that he rests his pet theory, but seeks to fortify further his position by culling out hymns that ostensibly bear the interpretation desired. Admittedly, the Ṛgveda as a heterogeneous aggregate (*Samhitā*) of hymns, traceable to successive generations of thinkers and distinct levels or strata of thought,—which, by the way, is an accredited conclusion of critical researches in the Ṛgveda,—offers an admirable scope for such a policy of pick-and-choose. Although this characteristic appears *in excelsis* in the Ṛgveda, it is an outstanding feature of all development in the cultural history of India. The synchronousness of the earlier and the later, and the resulting syncretism in the Ṛgveda spring from the method of superimposition or comprehension by inclusion, which is the just the method of racial accretion by incorporation of alien ethnic stocks. The formula of all such development,—if development at all it can be called,—is not the emergence of the later by way of incorporating what is of value in the earlier till at last the climax is reached in a consummate value, but is one in which each succeeding stage, instead of ousting or negating the preceding one, is superimposed on the latter. This accounts for the Ṛgvedic repetitions that seldom fail to strike the discerning reader. Accordingly, there is considerable risk, in the face of the synchronous appearance of polytheistic and mono-

1 e.g. Pandit Kokilesvar Sāstri in his *Advaitavāda*.

2 अग्निमीले पुरोहिते । यज्ञस्य देवमृत्विजं होतारं रवधातमं

theistic passages in the Ṛgveda, of assigning primacy to the latter and explaining away the former as being the viewpoint of the unphilosophical. This can only be secured, as it has been evidently done, by way of a systematic supersession of the plain meaning in favour of the implied. This is, for one thing, forcing facts on the Procrustean bed of preconceived theories, or metaphysical predilections on the part of the interpreter; and, besides, it is suggestive of a wide gulf between the philosophical and the unphilosophical, the *pāramārthika* and the *vyāvahārika*, the esoteric and the exoteric, in the domain of knowledge—a class-distinction which in the democracy of knowledge can not be suffered to hold its own. Truly viewed, the *vyāvahārika* is but the *pāramārthika* in the making; for, strictly speaking, knowledge is always of Reality or the *Paramārtha*, and, therefore, all intellectual progress is not one from ignorance or unthinking activity to knowledge or reflective thought, but is a progress in knowledge. If science, or philosophy for the matter of that, be a criticism of common sense, it is always to be viewed as a self-criticism or as an immanent criticism—the criticism in question being never superinduced *ab extra*. The defence of rigid Advaitism that seeks to ensure an easy success by way of an initial separation between the *vyāvahārika* and the *pāramārthika*, and a proleptic use of the category of 'end', is foredoomed to failure. It may have the merit of simplicity to commend itself; but it is essentially lacking in that historic sense which has its relative importance and use in the study of the Ṛgveda that is, intrinsically, not so simple as it is made out to be. The attempt obviously proceeds upon the maxim that the Vedānta, and in particular its essence, Advaitism, is implanted in the Veda,<sup>1</sup> but it construes the principle with a literalness that strikes at the very root of all development. Indeed, it is not possible, within the meaning of the law of development, to have the flower along with the fruit, for the simple reason that

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<sup>1</sup> वेदे वेदान्तः सुप्रतिष्ठितः ।

the decay of the flower is the condition of the appearance of the fruit. The attempt in question, as typical of the absolutist's Absolute which 'has no seasons, but all at once bears its leaves, fruit, and blossoms',<sup>1</sup> evinces a constitutional impatience for all process of growth or movement; for, we are told, 'nothing perfect, nothing genuinely real, can move'.

While ceasing to claim immutable perfection for the hymns of the Ṛgveda, the more rational procedure would be to recognise distinct levels of perfection in the Ṛgveda without prejudice to its integrity or inner continuity. As a matter of fact, continuity of process, as we have recently learnt, does not demand that the last phase of it should be prefigured in the very first, but that it is perfectly commensurate with the emergence of real differences in respective levels of the process. Such is undoubtedly the case with the different strata of the Ṛgveda against the background of a thought-continuity—not surely an 'unbroken' continuity, if by that were meant one, exclusive of real differences. For, as the late Professor Wallace taught us long ago, 'all development is by breaks and yet makes for continuity'.<sup>2</sup> There is, of course, no unanimity on the question of strata in Ṛgvedic thought. 'The stratification that will meet the ends of a philosophical study is the three-fold one of naturalistic polytheism, monotheism and agnostic monism along with henotheism, pantheism and panentheism as their correlates in their varied permutation and combination. As already observed, the inherent syncretism of the Ṛgvedic thought and culture makes it well nigh impossible to mark off one stratum rigidly from another, each being essentially a composite structure comparable more or less to the Anaxagorean *ὁμοιομερῆ*, according to which 'in all there is something of all'. Now, as in the case of all first beginnings of a 'thinking consideration of things' (*denkende Betrachtung der Gegenstände*) in the Hegelian sense, the

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<sup>1</sup> Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, (2nd ed.), p. 500.

<sup>2</sup> *Prolegomena to Hegel's Logic* (2nd ed.), p. 476.

naturalistic polytheism of the Ṛgveda is a conglomerate mass of religion, mythology and philosophy or science, in the wider sense of the term, the pivot of which is a full and frank recognition of a plurality of gods. It must be distinctly understood, at the very outset, that the anthropological interest in the Vedic religion gives an initial misdirection to all dispassionate enquiry by assimilating it to animism, spiritism, and the like. This serves only to mystify the issue instead of focussing its light on the central theme. The Ṛgvedic religion, whatever else it might be, is not an anthropological specimen merely. It is in all conscience, a naturalistic polytheism, and not a polytheistic, or any other type of naturalism. It is no less different from naturalism in the modern sense of the term, than it is from the Greek prototype of the case in Hylozoism. Then, again, the religion of the Ṛgveda, although mainly nourished by its interest in the operations of nature or natural phenomena, is as much a natural, as a social religion.

The *Devas* or gods of the Ṛgveda have had, like us mortals, their share of vicissitudes at the hands of interpreters. Some are of opinion that it is one and the same God that beams through the protean masks of godhood, and therefore, its apparent polytheism is but a masked monotheism. Some, again, hold in deference to the realities of the situation, as also a preponderately theistic interest, that the gods are only 'the allegorical representations of the attributes of the Supreme Deity'. Others, again, believe the gods to be mere magic formulæ in the keeping of Levitical priesthood of a primitive people. Sāyana, whose commentary on the Ṛgveda stands to this day as the very monument of orthodox scholarship, favours a naturalistic interpretation of the gods. Although it sounds paradoxical, all of these explanations, and none of these, are true,—in as much as each contains only a fragment of truth, the highest plausibility belonging, of course, to Sāyana's interpretation. Now, the plurality of the *devas* is frankly based on their functional differences. To put it bluntly, a *deva* is what he does—a category that is comprehensive enough to

include the functions he is authoritatively invested with.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, those who exploit, in the interest of non-dualism or singularism, the promiscuous naming of the gods, and the constant interchange of their functions, overlook this basic fact. It is their contention, pure and simple, that there is no distinction between the gods in respect of names and functions, and that this distinction between the gods has not been recognised because of their oneness in respect of substantive or essential existence. What detracts from the cogency of this argument is the simultaneous acknowledgment made by these very people, following the *Nirukta*<sup>2</sup> that all the gods are but the members of one Supreme Spirit. The metaphor that is drawn upon in this regard by the *R̥gveda* itself viz. that of 'branches of a tree'<sup>3</sup> is equally suggestive. What these two telling examples conclusively establish, by force of their logical implication, is that the gods maintain their integrity and individuality—a functional difference at least, though not a substantive one—without prejudice to the notion of distinction, without a difference, in the unity of the whole. There is no sense in speaking of the gods as parts or members of a unity—no matter whether it is the unity of a *socius*, or a self-conscious being—unless these parts or members are recognised as such in the unity of the whole. Whether this 'membership' in question stands committed to the Hegelian principle of 'unity-in-difference' need not deter us here ; but what it clearly demands is the recognition that the so-called 'members' are not like 'elements', to be massed together in a distinctionless unity—of the type of 'the Absolute in which all cows are black'. For, after all, there is a world of difference between an 'element' and a 'member' of a whole, and it is only by an abuse of language that the two can be used synonymously.

Here, as elsewhere, Yāska's interpretation seems to be on the true line of advance, so far as it allows full latitude

१ देवो दानाहा दीपनाहाद्योतनाहाद्युत्थानो वा भवति—निबन्ध ।

२ एकस्यात्मनोऽप्ये देवाः प्रत्यङ्गानि भवन्ति—vii, 4.

३ e.g. V. 40. v.

to varieties of function as the basis of multiple designations of each god.<sup>1</sup> It is on this basis that he proceeds to classify the Vedic gods, and proposes a triadic classification of these into terrestrial, aerial and celestial, corresponding to the three regions of पृथ्वी, अन्तरिक्षं and द्यौः. Thus is laid the foundation of a science of mythological interpretation recognised by Yāska—the *Adhidaivata*, the *Ātilihāsika*, the *Adhiyajna* and the *Ādhyātmika* school. Of these the *Ādhyātmika* school of mythological interpretation which, in its enunciation of self as the central principle of explanation, distinctly anticipates the main findings of the Sāṃkhya and Vedānta systems of thought, is worthy of our attention. Starting from the *Purusha-sūkta*<sup>2</sup> (which, though forming a part of the last *maṇḍala* of the Ṛgveda, really belongs to the age of Brāhmaṇa speculation), there is to be found a persistent effort to institute a close correspondence and affinity “between the microcosm and the macrocosm.”<sup>3</sup> In the *Purusha-sūkta* itself, the gods are made out to be the agents of creation, and the body of the great Purusha the stuff of which the world is made. The creative act is figuratively spoken of as a sacrifice (यज्ञः) with ‘the Supreme Purusha himself as forming the victim’. Muir is staggered at the sacrilegious ‘profanity’<sup>4</sup> of such a representation. Those who bring an open mind to bear on the question would much rather testify to the profundity and grandeur of the theme. Leaving aside its later symbolism together with all its fantastic speculations, one is constrained to admit the force of its philosophic implication. Creation is herein conceived as a self-abnegation or a self-denying ordinance on the part of the creator. It is suggestive of an original self-heterisation and a passing over into the otherness of an external world as a point of extreme self-alienation. There can be, indeed, no suggestion

१ एकैकस्या अपि बहूनि नामधेयानि भवन्त्यपि वा कर्मप्रयत्नात्—Nirukta, Daivatakāṇḍam, vii. 5.

२ Ṛgveda, Xth maṇḍala, Sūkta 90.

३ Cf. Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upanishads*.

४ Vide *Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. V, p. 373

of 'profanity' in a case of self-immolation or self-sacrifice—a voluntary acceptance, on the part of the creator, of the bondage of creation. Thus is also secured a fundamental oneness of essence between the world within and the world without, between the subjective and the objective, without the suggestion of a basic dualism which is too likely to creep into any story of creation that is not otherwise armed against a radical antithesis between the two.

What is, further, noteworthy here from the philosophic point of view is the prescription of the anthropomorphic method (पुरुषविधाः),<sup>1</sup> which has undoubtedly its use so long as it is saddled with safeguards. On the application of this method, what is interpreted as regards the gods (*adhidaivatam*) as earth, atmosphere and sky becomes mind, breath and speech as regards the self (*adhyātman*), wind, fire, sun, the quarters and the moon corresponding respectively to breath, speech, eye, ear and mind. The parallelism of the macrocosm with the microcosm, of the cosmic order (*adhidaivatam*) with the psychological functions of the man (*adhyātman*) comes in for further elaboration, when the space within the heart is held to correspond to cosmic space, the breath of man to the wind, the speech to fire, the eye to the sun, the ear to the moon, the mind to the lightning. It is held that there are five cosmic spaces, five gods of nature, five classes of beings, and correspondingly we have five vital airs, five senses, five parts of the body. Finally, there is *Dharma*, law, and truth for the world and for the man ; and the cumulative force of all these evidences of parallelisms proves that 'the macrocosm and the microcosm are interrelated in an indissoluble union of reciprocal service and support'.<sup>2</sup> These suggestions of parallelism, although not presented in a strictly philosophical form, are nevertheless fraught with immense importance for later

१ अथाकारचिन्तनं देवतानाम् । पुरुषविधाः स्युरित्येकं चेतनावद्विस्तृतयो भवन्ति तथाभिधानानि—*Ibid.*

२ Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upanishads*, Vol. II.



philosophic constructions. Viewed in their historical perspective, they may be said to contain the germ-plasm of Idealism and Realism in Indian thought with all their minute ramifications and notable variations. But in themselves they stand at the parting of ways, and are susceptible as much of a realistic as of an idealistic construction. From the standpoint of epistemology or theory of knowledge, the underlying assumption of all these parallelisms is, as was also in the case of Empedocles of old, that like is known by like (*similia similibus percipiuntur*). It would be perhaps more to the point to compare Schopenhauer's 'anthroposophy' with its view of the world (*Weltanschauung*) as *macranthropos*, according to which man as the union of will (which is the thing-in-itself) and body (which is only an objectification of the will) furnishes 'the key to the whole question of metaphysics'. Such is indeed the implication of the cryptic saying current among thinkers of the Vaishnava school that what is in this pot of human body is to be found in the world abroad (i.e. the primordial egg). The best exposition we have had so far of the meaning and importance of the function of *devatā* or god in a philosophic reference is to be found in Prof. K. C. Bhaṭṭācāryya's 'Studies in Vedantism', where it is contended that 'every *devatā* demands a *loka*. Psychologically put, an absolute unity, to be real, must be not only thought but realised in some sort of *intuition*. In aesthetic (visual) intuition, for example, we realise a *devatā*, like the sun, the unity of seeing and the visible world..... The distinction between the subject and object in ordinary knowledge appears in the absolute sphere as a distinction between *loka* and *devatā*. Only in ordinary knowledge the subject takes the lead, whereas here the *devatā*, which corresponds to the object, is the higher reality. What is from the lower standpoint my intuition of an object is from the higher standpoint, a *devatā* shining, revealing himself in a *loka*'.<sup>1</sup>

As already observed, the so-called 'polytheism' of the

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<sup>1</sup> *Studies in Vedantism*, p. 19.

Ṛgveda does not stand for an unmitigated pluralism, without any redeeming grace either from the logical or the religious point of view. Properly speaking, it marks a phase of qualified pluralism in the gradual emergence of a growing sense of the One in the many. This first feature of Hindu theism is clearly evidenced by the concept of organic dependence in the way of major and minor (अङ्गमन्यङ्गभावः) among the gods in their relation to one another—by the concepts, in particular, of reciprocal inherence (अन्योन्याश्रयः) and reciprocal generation (अन्योन्योत्पत्तिः). As against an anarchical regime of the gods implied in the term 'polytheism', the inherent unifying tendency of the Vedic religion exhibits itself, without detriment, however, to the individuality of the gods distributively, in the collective concept of *sarvadevatā*, or the one more commonly used *viśvedevāḥ*. What such a concept clearly stipulates for is a federated community of gods, without the suggestion either of an absolute or limited monarchy,—if at all, only a divine sovereignty in a state of shifting equilibrium. Perhaps it would not be going too far to infer from the non-elision of the inflectional suffix in the collective term '*viśvedevāḥ*' that full concession has been made for the respective rights of each god in the pantheon, just as in stressing the individuality of the component members of a collection or assembly, such as a 'jury', for example, the term is always used in the plural. To what extent this divine collectivism was influenced and moulded by the social environment of the people of that age, it is not easy to determine. The Vedic pantheon might have been, for aught we know,<sup>1</sup> the replica of a particulate structure in ancient Indian polity, evolving from the association of free men as the basis of the corporate life in tribal assembly and village community and, through village government by such corporations as *sabhās* and *samitis*, exhibiting its typical character in centrifugal tendencies against the incidence of a Central state with sole sovereignty. It is, therefore, quite in the fitness of things that the priest should no longer appear

1 Vide Dr. B. N. Seal's *Syllabus in Indian Philosophy*.

in the rôle of mediator, but only as the agent and representative of the *Yājñika* or the congregation before the altar united in mind and purpose. Nowhere does it come out so pointedly as in the high-pitched strain of unison on which the *Ṛgveda* closes—<sup>1</sup>“united be your intentions, united (the wishes) of your hearts, united be your thoughts, so that there may be thorough union among you.” It would be carrying a philosophical interpretation to its breaking-point in trying, as some have done, to elicit from the suggested view of unity of purpose between different minds, the metaphysical creed of Advaitism with its doctrine of an existential oneness of souls.

It is necessary to consider certain accessory phenomena contributory towards the emergence of the next higher stage, namely, of monotheism. At the very outset one can not help commenting on the doubtful wisdom of coining the term ‘henotheism’ to designate a stage in the evolution of the religious consciousness of the race—a stage which is ever in a state of unstable equilibrium, and justifies itself only by a perpetual self-transcendence. The mental state that is supposed to have originated it clearly believes the clear-cut neatness and definiteness that such a coinage of a new term is suggestive of. It is pre-eminently a case of arrested development, the accompanying mental state of the worshipper having only a transitive and not a substantive reality. While admitting that Henotheism, as ‘an unconscious groping towards monotheism’ seems ‘to be the result of the logic of religion’, Prof. Rādhākrishnan rightly observes that ‘the whole position is a logical contradiction, where the heart showed the right path of progress and belief contradicted it.’<sup>2</sup> Indeed, such a rotatory monotheism satisfies neither the requirements of logical rigour nor of religious integrity. Accordingly, there seems to be no exaggeration about Bloomfield’s description of it as ‘polytheism grown cold in service, and unnice in its distinctions,

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1 समानो व आकृतिः समाना इदयाणि वः । समानमस्तु वो मनो यथा वः ससङ्गासति ।

2 Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 9.

leading to an opportunist monotheism, in which every god takes hold of the sceptre and none keeps it'.<sup>1</sup>

The first thing that arrests our attention in his steady advance towards monotheism is the idea of a transcendent reality—a world of Forms or Essences—standing over against the phenomenal world. This is clearly implied in the distinction that is consistently made between the two aspects or forms—one supreme or refined (परम) and the other lower or gross (अवर्ग)—of each of the more important gods, such as *Agni* (fire-god), *Vāyu* (wind-god), *Indra*, the sovereign or champion god, the Indian Zeus, *Soma*, the moon-god, the god of inspiration or elixir of life, and *Sūrya*, the Sun-god. Accordingly, the gods have been characterised as the 'twice-born' (द्विजन्मानः).<sup>2</sup> For example, *Agni* is invoked, and the prayer runs thus: "O *Agni*, we shall offer our homage unto thy higher ancestry, glorify with hymns thy lower or proximate place of birth".<sup>3</sup> Then, again, in the famous context in which mention is made of the last rites of the dead and the belief entertained that the eyes relapse into the sun and breath unto the wind, *Agni* comes in for a double-edged reception. Referring to the fire on the funeral pyre, the worshipper exclaims "I repudiate this *Agni* which is the consumer of flesh; let this muck-carrier retire into the abode of Yama, the god of death. May the other *Agni*, who is here, knowingly carry the oblation unto the gods!"<sup>4</sup> By way of precedence, therefore, that *Agni* is invoked who is supposed to be the custodian of the immortal part of the dead, and is importuned thus: "O *Agni*, do thou transport, by virtue of that gracious appearance of thine, this

<sup>1</sup> The Religion of the Veda, p. 199.

<sup>2</sup> *Rgveda*, VI. 50. ii.

<sup>3</sup> विधेम ते परमे जन्मन्त्रये, विधेम सोमोरवरे सधस्ये—*Ibid.* II. 9. iii.

<sup>4</sup> ऋग्व्यादमग्निं प्रहिषोमिदूरं, यमराज्यं गच्छतु रिप्रवहः। इहैवायमितरो जातवेदा, देवेभ्यो हव्यं वहतु प्रजानेन.—*Ibid.* X. 16. ix.

departed soul into the abode of the virtuous.”<sup>1</sup> This invocation irresistibly reminds one of a kindred prayer in the *Īśāvāsyopanishad*,<sup>2</sup> addressed to Pūshan, the solar god, and, what is more to the point, to *Agni* in the same context: “O, Fire, lead us on by a virtuous path to our reward. O God, thou knowest all our deeds; take off the crooked things from us. We offer addresses in homage unto you.”<sup>3</sup> The point to be specially noted here is the investiture of *Agni* with an all-embracing knowledge and custodianship of the moral distinctions. Similarly, *Vāyu* is supposed to possess a superior and an inferior form—in its superior form going by the name of ‘*Mātariśvā*’.<sup>4</sup> In the case of *Indra*, *Soma* and *Sūrya* (as sometimes also in the case of *Agni*), three, and not merely two forms are recognised—the lower or gross, the higher or refined and the highest, supreme or eternal. *Indra* is held to sustain two orders of existence and the third abides eternal and immutable in heaven.<sup>5</sup> This is in substantial agreement with the ascription of “three strides” (तौषि पदा),<sup>6</sup> one of them being designated the perfect or the supreme *locus standi* (परमं पदम्) revealing itself to the wise and sustaining within it a fountain-head of nectar (मन्त्र उत्सः).<sup>7</sup> So far as *Soma* is concerned people think that they can partake of *Soma* by extracting the juice from the *Soma*-plant, but the wise alone know that the true *Soma* is beyond the reach of mortals,<sup>8</sup> is the seer of all, and shining resplendent in his third abode (तृतीयं धाम).<sup>9</sup> Finally, in the well-known *ṛk* (no. 10) of the 50th sūkta of the 1st Maṇḍala, *Sūrya* appears as having three forms or levels of existence: one is the gross form (उत्) which dispels the darkness of the terrestrial region, the next higher is that of a god

1 अजी भागस्तपसा तं तपस्व तं ते शोचिस्तपतु तं ते अर्जिः । यास्ते शिवास्तनो जातवेदस्ताभिर्व्येष्टेनं सुकृताम् लोकम् ।—*Ibid*, X. 16. iv.

2 Already quoted and commented upon in Lecture I.

3 अये नय सुपथा राये अस्मान्निश्चानि देव वयुनानि विद्वान् ।

ययोध्यस्मज्जुह्वाणमेनो भयिष्ठा ते नमउक्ति विधेम ॥

4 *Rgveda*, I 168. i-vi.; VII. 56. ii-xii; VIII, 94. ii-x; X. 186. i-iii.

5 *Ibid*, VII 51, iv and 52, vii.

6 *Ibid*, I. 22, xvii, xx.

7 *Ibid*, I. 154, v.

8 *Ibid*, X. 85, iii.

9 *Ibid*, IX. 96, xviii.

among the gods (उत्तरम्) and finally the highest is that of supreme effulgence which is but the Supreme Being.<sup>1</sup>

The other notable factor in promoting the advance from polytheism to monotheism is the concept of Ṛta (ऋतं) as the sustaining principle alike of the gods and the world. Standing, as it does *inter alia*, for an impersonal order or law, pervading the physical and the moral world, it may be said to have created a landmark in the history of Vedic thought and culture. With regard to the meaning of a term of such mighty importance, doctors must needs differ. In the very first sūkta of the 1st Maṇḍala, there occurs the term 'ṛta' (wherein *Agni* is being extolled as the sustainer and glorifier of the ṛta),<sup>2</sup> and Sāyaṇa interprets it thus: ऋतस्य सत्यस्यावश्यंभाविनः कर्मफलस्य. Yāska favours the interpretation of it as *satyam* (सत्यम्). In tracing the origin and growth of the meaning of the term, Max Müller<sup>3</sup> has recorded the opinion that the term 'ṛta' originally stood for the appointed course of the sun, the moon and the stars; subsequently, it came to mean the 'sacrifice' regulated by their periodical movements and, finally, law or *dharma* in its ordinary usage. Professor Keith's construction of the term, with variations in emphasis provides an interesting study. "In the physical world" says he,<sup>4</sup> "there rules a regular order, Ṛta, which is observed repeatedly, and which is clearly an inheritance from the Indo-Iranian period;" and "from the physical it is an easy step to the conception of the Ṛta.....in the moral world." Later by way of developing the point of ethical interest in Ṛta, he proceeds to observe that the term for cosmic order, Ṛta, and its opposite, Anṛta, express also moral order as in the dialogue of Yama and Yamī; Ṛta forbids and doubtless also commands positive action. Ṛta is more than truth, *Satya*,

1 *RgVeda*, I. 50. X.

2 *Rk*, 8.

3 Vide his 'Origin and Growth of Religion', pp. 245-50.

4 *The Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upanishads*, Vol. I. p. 83.

nor can we say with Wundt that Vedic India makes the good and the true identical, though truth is given an extraordinary high place, in its various senses of accuracy of statement, faithful performance of promises, and the assurance that what should happen will happen, and that the order of things is as it ought to be. Law is denoted by Dharman, which denotes that which supports and that which is supported ; it applies like Ṛta to all aspects of the world, to the sequence of events in nature, to the sacrifice and to man's life."<sup>1</sup> But the cumulative effect of all textual criticisms and inferences seems to be nullified by the somewhat damaging statement that 'the moral element in the Ṛgveda and the subsequent literature is of comparatively small extent, and the vast majority of the Vedic hymns are not concerned in the remotest degree with questions of morals.'<sup>2</sup> In meeting the point of this criticism, well-informed as it is, one should not take one's stand upon the quantitative aspect of the question ; *non multa, sed multum* should rather be the guiding principle here. For, truly a grain of philosophic insight can remove mountains of textual or philosophical interpretations. There is hardly any room for doubt that those hymns of the Ṛgveda which are indisputably enunciative of a moral tone cannot be counter-balanced, far less overruled, even by a 'vast majority' of hymns that are morally neutral. If it can be proved that the Ṛgvedic gods, as the *prius* or precondition, both logically and causally, of the physical or natural order of things, are the sustainers of, and sustained by, the Ṛta, the moot-question of the ethics of the Ṛgveda will no longer remain a dubious issue.

That all the gods both collectively and distributively, are presiding over, and permeated by, the Ṛta is almost a perpetual refrain in the Ṛgveda. Instead of hunting after isolated statements, the more judicious course would be to appeal to the famous *Hamsavati Ṛk*<sup>3</sup> (IV 40. 5) where its recognition has

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 248-9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 249.

<sup>3</sup> *Ṛgveda*, IV. 40.

been urged as a matter of principle. It is held therein that everything in this universe has its respective sphere or locus—the sun in the sky, the priest at the altar, the guest in a house. But the Ṛta is here, there and everywhere dwelling among men, in places glorified and of sacrifice, in the water, in the sky, in sun-light, in the mountains and in truth. Sāyana thinks that this ṛk only purports to establish a tri-une Essence or a perfect oneness of the following three of the trinity—the golden-head Deity that presides over the sun, the universal physical principle or soul-substance immanent in all living beings, and the Supreme Being or Brahman devoid of all determinations. One may reasonably refuse to follow Sāyana's lead here ; but, then the Ṛk, taken by itself, is a standing testimony alike to the moral grandeur of the theme, and the pre-eminently ethical character of the Ṛta. Thus the point we sought to establish—namely, a pre-established harmony and reciprocity between the gods and the Ṛta—is here proved to demonstration. Although the gods as a rule, stand intimately related to the Ṛta, it is the triad of Varuna, Mitra and Aryaman that is credited with the guardianship of the moral law, or the Ṛta. All the relevant hymns are, by way of pre-eminence, addressed to Varuna of fixed purpose (धृत्वन्नः), who along with his inalienable partner, Mitra, is, the custodian of the moral order of the world, the Ṛta, with its double aspects of orderly conduct (अनं) and essential nature of things (सत्त्वं). It is in the deviation from the established order of things and customary morals that the consciousness of sin or moral delinquency consists, and nearly all the hymns to Varuṇa throw into prominent relief an acute sense of moral guilt on the part of the wrong-doer who trembles 'like a guilty thing surprised' before Varuṇa, the omniscient and the omnipresent, who has a thousand spies and knows all things—who is present as the third wherever two men come together.<sup>1</sup> These furnish the most convincing proof, if proof at all were

<sup>1</sup> Vide Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and Upanishads*, p. 247.



necessary, regarding the indigenous origin and growth of the notion of sin in the Vedas. Even Prof. Keith found a hard nut to crack here. "It is" he observes, "by no means certain exactly in what way the conception of the connexion of Varuṇa with sin sprang into such prominence, if we assume, as we must in the absence of evidence to the contrary, that the conception of sin as punished by Varuṇa is an Aryan one, and not a conception borrowed from a Semitic race."<sup>1</sup> Beginning, therefore, with the concept of *Ṛta* as the natural or physical order, there is a steady and continuous advance through the interpretation of it as social law or customary conduct, till it reaches its culminating point in a cosmic justice or equity, a moral order of the world. The *Ṛta* thus stands as much for a physical as for a moral order—the former standing in an instrumental or subordinate relation to the latter. What affords an historic parallel to this is the Stoic maxim of 'life according to nature,' which is but another way of saying 'life according to reason' in as much as the whole world is pervaded and penetrated by a 'fiery breath' ( πνεῦμα διαπυρον ) which, in the Stoic rendering of it, is a 'germinative reason' ( λόγος σπερματικός ). If, therefore, an ethics of the *R̥gveda*, rooted in the *Ṛta*, be at all conceded, it is not to be construed as an ethics of naturalism with its apotheosis of *la bête humaine*. It provides, in the stricter sense, an ethics in accordance with the highest human ideal which was destined to realise all its ethical implications in the Law of Karma. Of that there is surely no room for misgivings; for accredited exponents of the philosophy and history of religion, like Pfleiderer, view 'the *Ṛta* and Karma of the Hindus' as more or less hyphenated in their nature, and classify them, on grounds of functional similarity, with the *Nemesis* ( Νέμεσις ) of the Greeks, the *Ashavaista* of the Persians and the *Tao* of the Chinese.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, along these two lines of reflexion—viz. that of a

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 246.

<sup>2</sup> Vide, his *Philosophy and Development of Religion*, Vol. I, Sec. IV.

transcendent Reality beyond phenomena and an impersonal Law—we are led to the idea of a Supreme Being as Person (पुरुषः) which forms the pivot of a spiritualistic Monotheism. The first in importance is that of Hiranyagarbha we come across in the opening verse of X, 121 where he is represented as 'the first-born' (समवर्त्ततामे), and as installed to sole sovereignty over all created beings, and is finally identified with Prajāpati, as the lord of all creatures. From parity of functions it is clear that the Prajāpati, again, is the god Viśvakarmā, the maker or architect of all, and the equation has been made in so many words, in *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*.<sup>1</sup> Even in the *R̥gveda*, Viśvakarmā is invested with a pre-eminence<sup>2</sup> that alone squares with the status and function assigned to Hiranyagarbha and Prajāpati. Now there is, strictly speaking, no inaptitude in the equation thus effected between the first-born, Hiranyagarbha and Prajāpati or Viśvakarmā in the rôle of a Supreme Creator. Likewise it is maintained that from the *Purusha Virāt* was born, and from *Virāt* proceeded the *Purusha*. The point of all such equation is a scrupulous regard for obviating the difficulties that beset the conception of a First Creator. Truly speaking, 'contentment with the regress to a God-creator or some similar notion is the true mark of speculative indolence.' For, an abrupt arresting of the causal regress at a First Cause or God-creator lays itself open to the most pertinent question of the child: "Who made God?" One way of escape from this *impasse* is a straight-forward denial of creation in the strict sense of the term, accompanied with the demonstration that the supreme reality is, as in Erigena and Bruno, at once *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*. But no less marked is the tendency in the *R̥gveda* to stave off the incidence of this pantheistic denial, and to envisage fully the problem of creation in a theistic regard. It is the far-famed Nāsadiya Sūkta<sup>3</sup> that affords a striking evidence of the 'bitter earnest' with which the problem

<sup>1</sup> VII. 2. i. 10; VIII. 2. iii. 13.

<sup>2</sup> X. 82. ii.

<sup>3</sup> *R̥gveda*, X. 129.

of creation has been approached, and presented with a telling effect through an imagery that is commensurate with the grandeur of the theme. Here we have the unambiguous assertion of "That One" (तदेकम्), with its central importance in a creative reference, who 'breathed by itself without breath, other than it, there was nothing.'<sup>1</sup> Although there is in the opening *ṛk* of this *sūkta* a problematic admission of a primeval deep abyss,—and elsewhere<sup>2</sup> a clear enunciation of an all-encompassing water as a co-operating condition co-eval with the creator—the Nāsadiya hymn may be taken as the very text of uncompromising monotheism, rounding itself off in a characteristic speculative monism of the agnostic or mystic type, with its inevitable *ignoramus* in the end. This is surely better than the story of creation told by a world-architect, a *Demiurgus* (δημιουργός), as the fashioner or manipulator of a pre-existent *ύλη* or unformed matter. In respect of its philosophic implications, the hymn compares more favourably with the cryptic utterance in the Book of Genesis where 'the spirit of God' 'moving on the face of the waters' is said to have imparted a quickening impulse to the creation of all that was to be.

This original brooding or inward concentration of the creative impulse is suggested by the term '*tapas*' (तपः) which is, at least in the Upanishads<sup>3</sup> identified with the creative principle or its *modus operandi*. The primary manifestation of this spiritual fervour of inwardisation is the impact of Desire (*Kāma*) as 'the primal seed of mind' which, as the fourth *ṛk* clearly lays down, serves to explain 'the root of Being in Non-Being.' Although this original seed of mind (मनसो रितः) clearly involves self-consciousness as its logical *prius*, the question of

1 आनीदवाताम् स्वधया तदेकं । तन्माह्वान्यन्न परः किंचनास—*Ibid*, X, 129, ii.

2 *Ibid*, X. 72, vi.; X. 121, vii.

3(a) तपसा चीयते ब्रह्म ततोऽन्नमभिजायते ।

ब्रह्मात् प्राणी मनः सत्यं लोकाः कर्मसु चावृतम् ॥—*Mundaka Up.*, I. i. 9.

(b) स तपोऽतप्यत । सतपक्त्वा ॥ इदं सर्वमसृजत ॥—*Taittiriya Up.*, II. 5.

(c) तपो ब्रह्मेति—*Ibid*, III. 4.

historical priority of the one or the other is irrelevant in a philosophical reference. The query—which precedes which—is as futile as the squirrel's chasing its own tail within the enclosure of its cage. As it has been well remarked, there is no first, but always, a second moment of consciousness. Accordingly this original desire, which is confessedly the outstanding feature of a self-conscious Purusha (सोऽकामयत) points unmistakably in the direction of an I-ness (*Ichheit*), as Fichte would say, which comprehends as well as transcends the opposition of the ego and the non-ego, the subject and the object—a pure I-go, which is not so much a fact as an act, of which strictly speaking, nothing can be predicated except the bare fact of its being. Thus, the note on which the hymn closes is one of ultimate doubts and uncertainty ; for, here we perceive that we have come to the end of our tether. The essential mystery of the creative act is clearly the burden of the last *rk* of the hymn in which we are told that He from whom this creation proceeded, whether he made it or did not, the highest seer in the highest of heavens, He forsooth knows it, or He might as well not know it!<sup>1</sup> Again, it is held,<sup>2</sup> as the concluding reflection of the Rgvedic seer, that people do not and cannot comprehend Him who has created this universe ; inherently mystified they indulge in speculations of various kind, while they go about catering to their brute necessities and uttering hymns or invocations *ad libitum*. The sentiment that inspired this reflection naturally looms large across the perspective of ages and commends itself to our acceptance when we find a notable philosopher of the present age confirming substantially the very same outlook. "We admit", says Bradley in summing up his 'ultimate doubts,' "the healthy scepticism for which all knowledge in a sense is vanity, which feels in its heart that science is a poor thing if measured by the wealth of

1 As against the common agnostic strain in which the *rk* is interpreted by European scholars, Sāyaṇa, however, interprets it as "He alone knows it."

2 Rgveda, X. 32, 7.

the real universe. We justify the natural wonder<sup>1</sup> which delights to stray beyond our daylight world, and to follow paths that lead into half-known, half-unknowable regions. Our conclusion in brief, has explained and has confirmed the irresistible impression that all is beyond us"<sup>1</sup>—the 'impression' entertained 'upon instinct' that 'to love unsatisfied the world is mystery, a mystery which love satisfied seems to comprehend.'<sup>2</sup>

It is then, the logic of speculative thought that bids us march past the last outpost of monotheism with its basic concept of one Supreme Being or Puruṣa. As soon as this one God or God-creator emerges into limelight, He loses himself in light, or at best, is resurrected and recognised as the One of philosophic formulation or speculative monism. Thus is ushered into existence the last or final phase of Ṛgvedic thought, following the lead of a logical order of development. The Nāsadiya hymn may, therefore, be said to stand at the cross-ways, pointing on the one hand to religion and, on the other, to philosophy, and marking, in effect, the transition from religion to philosophy. It is only superficial analysis that assimilates this hymn to that of Cleanthes to Zeus. The 'that One' (तदेकम्) of Nāsadiya sūkta has much more doctrinal affinity with the 'One Existent' of the famous Ṛgvedic text: "This one Being the wise call by various names Agni, Yama or Mātariśvā"<sup>3</sup> than with Zeus, 'nature's Great King' 'God, most glorious, called by many a name'. This is, however, not a solitary instance of the speculative monism of the Ṛgveda, but there are to be found scattered in it texts definitely inculcating a rigorous philosophical monism. Take for example, the refrain that occurs at the last line of each of the twenty-two ṛk's or hymns of sūkta 55 of Maṇḍala 3: "the great divinity of the gods is one." (महद्देवानामसुरत्वमेकं). Then, again,

1 *Appearance and Reality*, 2nd Ed., p. 549.

2 *Ibid.*, preface.

3 एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः—Ṛgveda, I. 164. xliv.

it is maintained that this One became all these,<sup>1</sup> or that the sages represent in various ways this One Being.<sup>2</sup> Now, the generic feature common to all these texts is a pronounced unity, ( एकत्वम् ), coupled with omni-formity ( विश्वरूपम् ),—that is to say, a unity in variety, which is at the farthest remove from a barren uniformity. There is no denying the fact that the unifying tendency of R̥gvedic thought, as of Indian thought in general, has not infrequently come under the spell of the mystic's One along with the false glamour encircling it. With 'a cloud' of unknowing' on its face, the mystic's 'One' or 'Absolute' is too apt to lose itself in the clouds, or through sheer excess of light to suffer itself to be enveloped in a 'Divine darkness.' The effect, however, is the same in both the cases ; and the mystic's desire to exalt the One, however laudable within limits, it illustrates the fate of 'Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself and falls on the other'. Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that the mystic contention that 'a comprehended God is no God' has a saving grace as against a cheap gnosticism. "What discredits religion", as it has been well said, "is not the unknowableness of God, but the knowableness of Mumbo-Jumbo."<sup>3</sup>

The culminating point, however, in this last phase of speculative monism is reached in the substantiation of the Self or Ego, as the supreme creative principle, which may be said to mark the beginning of ego-centric worship ( अहंयज्ञीपासना ). In the first instance what is called the Vāmadevīya S̥ūkta<sup>4</sup> inculcates the truth in its own figurative way thus: "I have been Manu, I have been Sūryya, I am the wise Ṛshi Kakshīvān. While even in the womb I came to learn in due course about the nativity of these gods. Encased previously in a hundred bodies of iron, I have now emerged with the velocity of a hawk"

1 एकं ये इदं विश्वम् सत्त्वं—R̥gveda, VIII. 58. ii.

2 कवयो वचोभिरेकं सन्तं बहुधा कल्पयन्ति—*Ibid*, X. 114. v.

3 L. P. Jacks, *Realities and Shams*, p. 19.

4 अहं मनुरभव सूर्यश्चाहं कवोवाण् गर्भे नु सद्रत्नवामवेदमहं देवानां जनिमानि विश्वा शतं मापुर् आयसौ ररक्षन्नय श्रेणो जवसा निरदीयं.—R̥gveda, IV. S̥ūktas 26 and 27.

All that the last passage implies, as Sāyaṇa clearly brings out, is that Vāmadeva emerged from the womb only when he realised that the soul-substance is distinct from the body and the rest of the material world. Stripped of all metaphor and myth, what this anecdote hints at is the truth that the inherent materialism of lumping together the body and the self, spells the bondage of the latter, and the knowledge that the self is essentially free can alone release it from the bondage in question. That is what later came in for recognition as scriptural wisdom or spiritual outlook (शास्त्रदृष्टिः). In view of the progressive emphasis upon, and consolidation of, this ego-centric point of view in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad*,<sup>1</sup> in the *Brahma-sūtras*, such as, शास्त्रदृष्ट्यात्पदेशो वामदेववत्<sup>2</sup> and in Śaṅkara, in particular, the importance of the Vāmadevīya Sūkta in the Ṛgveda cannot possibly be over-estimated. This point of view is further re-inforced by another famous hymn, known as the *Vāk Sūkta*.<sup>3</sup> Here *Vāk*,<sup>4</sup> the presiding deity over speech, is believed to be the seer or author, and represents herself as the sole creator and governor of all—as one whose glory is too great to be fully encompassed either by heaven or by earth.†

Reviewing the growth of Ṛgvedic thought as embodied in the hymns dedicated to their respective specific gods, the following graded hierarchy may, with a fair degree of accuracy, be made out: (1) Dyaus or Dyāvā-prithivī, as the god of nature-worship: (2) Varuṇa, as the moralised deity of awakened moral

1 I. iv. 10.

2 I. i. 30.

3 *Ṛgveda*; X. 125.

4 परो दिवा पर एना पृथिव्यै तावती महिना संबभूव—*Ibid*, 8.

† The authorship of this Sūkta to Vāk, the supposed daughter of a Ṛshi called Bṛhhaṇa is, to say the least of it, apocryphal. The more plausible hypothesis is that it is a hymn in honour of Vāk, i.e., wisdom or λόγος, the plausibility being reinforced by the consideration that a similar invocation is to be found among the Babylonians, Jews, Greeks, and markedly in the chap. VIII of the Book of Proverbs. I owe this last suggestion to Mr. A. Nag.

reflection of a later period ; (3) Indra, as the jealous god of the age of conquest and domination ; (4) Prajāpati, as the God-Creator of the monotheists ; and (5) Ekam or the One, as the maximised essence of each of the gods of the preceding stages.<sup>1</sup> The gradation satisfies at once the requirements of logic as well as chronology. Here, as elsewhere, chronological considerations can not be rigorously followed out on account of the inherent syncretism of Indian thought. The significance of the Ṛgveda in the making of the Vedānta lies not so much in any positive contribution towards it, but in preparing the field for the reception of the Vedānta. Although the main lines, on which Vedāntic thought was destined to develop hereafter, lie prefigured herein, the value of the Ṛgveda is to be measured by what it aspired to be and was not in actuality. It begins with that infantile wonder and its native hue of creative imagination, which is not, as yet, 'sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.' Later, reflective thought supervenes and seeks to introduce system and order into the reign of lawless mythologizing and god-making. Once criticism is aroused, the mongrel method of allegorizing is steadily on the wane, until the repugnant elements in that patched-up unity break asunder and dissipate it altogether. Before the noon-day achievements of reflective thought, the twilight of mythopœic activity does admittedly pale away into insignificance, and thus all its findings are safely relegated to a forgotten chapter in the history of human search after truth. Nevertheless the Ṛgveda, with all its backwardness, may truly be said to have succeeded in what it seems to have failed in: its twilight of god-making eagerly anticipates the dawn of a new intellectual era. Its failure, if it is to be at all called by that name, is but a triumph's evidence—an evidence of the perpetual urge of reflective thought in the search after truth. In this long and arduous pilgrimage, the truth-seeker is too apt to be deterred on the way-side by alluring allegories and myths masquerading as philosophic truth. Accordingly, in the making of the Vedānta,

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Rādhākṛishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I. ch. ii.



no prayer is more to the point than the one that has gone forth from the heart of the Īśāvāsyopanīṣhad :

“The entrance to truth is covered up by a shining disk ; that do thou, O solar god, remove so that the true religion may be envisaged.”<sup>1</sup>

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1 “हिरण्ययेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् ।  
तत्त्वं पूषन्नपात्रेण सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥”

## LECTURE III.

### FROM AUTHORITY TO FREEDOM: FROM ŚRUTI TO ANUBHŪTI.

The spiritual ferment, that had set in under the fostering care of a free, unfettered spirit of inquiry in the Ṛgveda, crystallized later as a set of dogmatics. One must hasten to add, however, that these stood, not for a stereotyped set of doctrines, meant to be forced down the throat of the members of a particular Church—for such there was none, but only *Aśramas* or hermitage for seers of revered memory, transmitting from age to age the rich legacy of their mystical intuitions or ecstatic revelations. These stand for that floating mass of experience, drawn upon by successive generations of truth-seekers, and reduced to order or system with the title of Vedānta Philosophy superinduced. These are all the dogmatics of the Vedānta school, conformity to which is never secured by an appeal to an extra-philosophical Authority, obviating the necessity of individual ratiocination (*vicāra*), or dispensing with the need of private mysticism in the matter of interpreting religious tenets. Neglecting differences of emphasis, what the different schools of Vedānta force into prominence is just the place of Śruti or Revelation in the Vedānta. But, to the philosopher of the Vedānta school, this appeal to Śruti or faith in Revelation is no mere emotional hypnosis induced by undiluted veneration for Authority, no mere blind or uncriticised faith in dogmas, but a provisional or tentative belief terminating in an assured conviction, begotten of logical ratiocination (*vicāraṇādhyavasānanirvṛttāḥ*),<sup>1</sup> as Śaṅkara himself would affirm. The word 'dogma,' because of its past abuses and aberrations, has come to figure as a veritable 'red rag' to the bull of free thinking, or the so-called Protestant 'right of private

<sup>1</sup> Com. on V. S. I. 1. ii.

judgment'. The appeal to faith in dogmas may be construed as a return to Authority, which runs 'directly counter to the spirit of the times, to the very spirit of modernism in thought and culture—modern philosophy itself being 'protestantism in the sphere of the thinking spirit', the story of a pilgrimage from Authority to Freedom. But freedom from what?—one may pertinently enquire. Not surely an 'unchartered freedom' to drift endlessly, which, after all, 'tires' and can not, humanly speaking, be sought for its own sake. While fully acknowledging that the spirit of Protestantism has not merely an historic justification, but an importance for all times, it is in the fitness of things to take stock at times of the net results, accruing from the exercise of the rights of private judgment in all matters affecting the well-being of the spirit. It is, confessedly, difficult in the extreme to withstand the spell of modernism or the witchcraft of the magic word 'freedom,' which so often hypnotises us, and to take dispassionately our bearings in order to find out if we have not, in the extravagance of our enthusiasm, overshot the mark. It is all the more imperative because all reactions, as we know, have a tendency to be radical, and we may, not infrequently, be losing the substance in clutching at the shadow. There is an obvious danger and not merely an unrelieved tedium, in perpetually sharpening one's knife when there is nothing to cut ; for it may recoil, for aught we know, upon those who wield it. The institution of Authority or of dogmas may not, after all, appear to be antagonistic to the ends of free thinking, when their respective relations are viewed in a proper perspective. The function of a dogma is, in a philosophical reference, mainly limitative or restrictive—prescribing the limits beyond which religious imagination or private mysticism may not, in its indispensable interpretative function, go astray. It works not by mechanical dictation but by illuminating inspiration—not by annexing or annulling the right of private judgment or mysticism, but by appealing and giving ungrudging recognition to these. It functions, in other words, not by invoking to its aid a supernatural machinery of Authority, but by always preferring its appeal to the natural light

of reason. Accordingly, one can subscribe to dogmas without being a dogmatist. Indeed, the dogmas truly viewed stand as the capitalised spiritual experience of the race, having an implicit rationality of their own and awaiting a rational verification in the personal experience of an individual. As it has been wisely observed,<sup>1</sup> 'what is dogma to the ordinary man is experience to the pure in heart.' Dogma is thus experience in the making, and faith or belief which has an air of dogmatism about it, to begin with, is but reason cultivating itself. Should such a faith offend the dignity of free thinking?

Viewed in a truer perspective, therefore, the age-long conflict between Revelationism and Rationalism, between Authority and free thinking, between Faith and Knowledge, ceases to have any terror for the Vedāntist. The solvent that might even to-day be brought to bear on the situation was enunciated long ago by Śaṅkarācāryya as one of the representative thinkers of the Vedānta school. It need not, indeed, be denied 'that Śaṅkara took up a fairly submissive attitude in regard to the authority of the Upanishad texts.'<sup>2</sup> In fact, it would be flying in the face of accredited facts—the *modus operandi* of Śaṅkara all through and his outspoken utterances with regard to the Śruti—to ignore the force of a criticism that takes, in all conscience, its stand upon crucial and committing statements of the Ācāryya himself. Take, for example, the philosophic defence of Authority that we have in one of his initial observations on the point: 'even ratiocination or dialectic is recognised by us so far as it is ancillary to Śruti or revealed knowledge.'<sup>3</sup> It is only with a variant of language that the same attitude is expressed in the recognition that it is only such dialectic or reasoning as is subservient to the Śruti that is accepted here, as being contributory to experience.<sup>4</sup> Such frank statements as these do not, however, convict Śaṅkara of 'implicit reliance

1 Rādhākṛishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I. p. 51.

2 W. S. Urquhart, *The Vedānta and Modern Thought*, p. 75.

3 मुख्ये च सहायत्वेन तर्कस्याप्युपेतत्वात्—Com. on V. S. I. 1. ii:

4 अत्यनुयोजित एव स्यात् तर्कोऽनुभवांगत्वेनाश्रीयते—Com. on V. S. II. 1. vi.

upon authority' nor justify a comparison of him 'with the scholastics of Europe.' The comparison is anything but happy, and betrays a clear lack of insight into Śaṅkara's position. "In a more intelligent rendering of it, it is recognised that Śaṅkara's 'subjection to authority is not necessarily inimical to philosophical spirit,' and the much too common imputation of unphilosophical authoritarianism is redeemed in the recognition of what has been, in strict fidelity to Śaṅkara's position, called the 'internalizing of authority.'<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, authority ostensibly imposing a bond does not, after all, bind ; for, the fetters that are thus forged are of our own making and the undoing of these is also ours. Its pre-eminent service lies in warding off the doubtful asset, if not the downright liability, of an unchartered freedom, and in the positive prescription of a chartered freedom in thinking, which alone can see us to the safe anchorage of experience, as the acknowledged terminus and goal of all discursive thinking and dialectic (अनुभावसान्ध तद्विज्ञानम्)<sup>2</sup>. It is along this road—and not along the by-path of anti-intellectualism which eventually leads us nowhere—that a proper co-ordination and adjustment of the respective rights of *Śruti* and *Purushamati*, Revelation and Reason can come about. Even the suspicion of an antagonism between the two, precipitating a hasty compromise, can only spell disaster in the end. It gives rise, on the one hand, to barrenness of philosophic thought—the like of which is to be seen in Mediæval philosophy—and, on the other, it fosters the blessedness of simple faith which is the crying curse of all Faith Philosophy. Even if we were to class Śaṅkara with the average thinkers of the Middle Ages, we should do well to remember that the much misunderstood scholastic phrase—*philosophia ancilla theologiæ* (which is only the European replica of Śaṅkara's dictum : श्रुत्येव च सहायत्वेन तर्कस्याध्यभ्युपेतत्वात्) —is suggestive of a collaboration between theology and philosophy, although it apparently means the sterilisation of the philosophic impulse. As a matter of fact,

1 W. S. Urquhart, *The Vedānta and Modern Thought*, p. 84.

2 Com. on V. S. II. 1. iv.

the subordination of Scholastic philosophy to Scholastic theology is only material and not formal. If science is but common sense rendered co-herent and systematised, theology or a philosophy of religion (तत्त्वविज्ञानम्) must necessarily draw upon religious experience and mystical intuitions as its appropriate material. In thus assigning a primacy to the *Śruti* as the repository and fountain-head of all inspiration in matters pertaining to a philosophy of religion or *Brahmajijñāsā*, Śaṅkara may, indeed, be called a Scholastic thinker in the truer sense of the term. But this label does in no way implicate the suggestion that Śaṅkara is a mere theologian, or commentator on revealed scriptures, like the schoolmen of mediæval Europe, and is called a philosopher only by courtesy. Śaṅkara, surely stands in a class apart—if that be the implication of the term 'Scholasticism'—in as much as he has never, in assigning a methodological priority to *Śruti* or faith in Revelation, lowered the prestige or dignity of rational apprehension or of an enlightened faith in the matter of attaining unto the *bonum consummatum*, the highest good (*Paramapurushārtha*) of man. So did St. Augustine, the first of the Patristic philosophers, claim that the appropriation of wisdom or divine knowledge is effected not so much by insight, as through faith or belief. Nevertheless, full rational insight is, in his opinion, first in dignity, but faith in revelation is first in time. This is exactly the position in which Śaṅkara stands respectively to *Śruti* and *Tarka* or *Vicāra*. Rooted as he was in an inflexible orthodoxy, Śaṅkara had yet the sufficiency to assign to reason its rightful rank even in the matter of attaining unto the highest bliss of mankind. His verdict—namely, that 'a man who somehow espouses a creed without prior discussion or critical reflexion is dispossessed of beatitude and incurs evil'<sup>1</sup>—may be regarded as being typically illustrative of the Vedāntic position concerning the issue of Revelation vs. reason. So far as Śaṅkara is concerned, it is a pronouncement which is hardly ever given

• 1 तत्त्वविचार्य यत् किञ्चित् प्रतिपद्यमानो निःशेषात् प्रतिज्ञेयतानर्थहेयात्  
—Com. on V. S. I. i.

the prominence it deserves in respect of a foundational significance attaching to it. In thus accentuating the rights of private judgment (विचारः) and the functional importance of experience (अनुभवः) in its integrity, Śaṅkara may be said to have cast off the out-worn badge of mediævalism, and taken on that of modernism. In view of an outspoken utterance like this, the apologetic strain in which some people speak of the claims of Śaṅkara as a philosophic thinker seems to be altogether uncalled for. It is to be noted that what is valued here by Śaṅkara is not the blessedness of unreflecting acquiescence or implicit faith—the bliss in other words, of a ‘fool’s paradise’—but what is cherished and invoked by him is the bliss of that enlightened faith, which, although differing from logical ratiocination or discursive knowledge, is yet to be regarded as the inspiration, ‘the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge.’ This single statement of Śaṅkara’s, though not a solitary one of its kind, is potent enough to dispose of the baseless charge that he is a mere theologian or at best a Revelationist propounding a system of dogmatics with uncritical reliance on the Vedas.

Now, what is Revelation? There is nothing inherently religious about it, unless the term ‘religion’ be understood in a very wide sense. It is a kind of inspiration or illumination that lights up the depths of the unknown—an experience to which artists and mystics, seers and prophets, poets and scientists, in a word, all classes of genius have testified. It is the experience, in psychological language, of persons having ‘thresholds of exceptional mobility,’ so that a very slight effort or departure from normal conditions will enable their latent or subliminal powers to emerge and occupy the foreground of consciousness. This abnormality is indicated by the very term ‘ecstasy’ meaning literally that mental state, in which one is beside oneself, that is to say, beyond one’s normal consciousness. The ‘wise passiveness’, which is characteristic of such ecstatic states, baffles an accurate psychological analysis. But that is no reason why such experiences should be condemned to live in the outskirts of Psychology as an untouchable class having an original taint in them. It will be nothing short of an

historical anachronism to stick, in the face of recent psychological advances, to the old classification of 'normal' and 'abnormal' mental states, the normal itself being, in these days, in a state of shifting equilibrium. The border-land between them is being steadily narrowed down, and the normal psychology is slowly, but surely, increasing its territorial limits by annexing much of what previously passed in the name of the 'abnormal.' For example, in direct defiance of the customary distinction between the normal and the abnormal, modern psychology has expounded a psychology of insanity, and entertained the possibility of co-ordinating insanity and genius. The new baptism and philosophic consecration that the abnormal has been receiving at the hands of Psychology may reasonably be extended to the supernormal, that is, the contents of Revelation which had been so long accorded the treatment meted out to the 'subnormal.' Psychology, as a positive science, should make no distinction between 'supernormal' and 'subnormal' or 'things above reason' and 'things below reason'—which are only distinctions of value.

It may be, perhaps, premature on our part to indicate, except in main outlines, how the changed outlook will react on our search after truth and the problem of Revelation. Even a subtle metaphysician of Bradley's eminence was not slow to acknowledge the first fruits of modern research. The position that 'my waking world' dominates and ought to dominate, because as a system it is vastly more rational, is peremptorily met by the remark that 'the abnormal mind is often wider than the mind called normal, and at times it may be said to include and comprehend the normal mind,' and thus 'the contention that our waking world is the one real order of things will not stand against criticism'.<sup>1</sup> All this is distinctly foreshadowed in Advaita-Vedānta and presented with the force of a metaphysical construction. According to it, there are four states of the soul : waking (जाग्रत्), dreaming (सुषुप्तिः), dreamless sleep (सुषुप्तिः) and the Turiya (तुरीयम्), literally the fourth state of the soul,

<sup>1</sup> Bradley, *Essays on Truth and Reality*, pp. 462-4.



—to which is sometimes added a fifth state, the *unmanī*, or the ecstatic state proper, which is but the fourth state 'arrived at maturity.' Now the world of waking consciousness which is regarded as 'my real world' depends on the presumed oneness of my self as knower with the body and sense-organs, and, likewise, activity is not possible except on the supposed continuity between the self and the body.<sup>1</sup> The waking state is that in which knowledge is occasioned by the activity of the sense-organs.<sup>2</sup> The dreaming state is one in which there is produced an immediate perception of objects in independence of sensations.<sup>3</sup> In the language of modern psychology, it is to be called non-sensuous perception, sensations not being the *conditio sine quā non* of perception (प्रत्यक्षम् 'according to the logic of the Vedānta'.<sup>4</sup> The attempt to account for this perceptual factor of dream-experience as being purely memory-begotten directly runs counter, so the Vedāntist argues, to such perceived facts as 'I see a chariot' or 'I saw the chariot in the dream.'<sup>5</sup> The explanation is further confirmed by quotation from the *Śruti* which also testifies to the creation of 'chariots' and 'teams' (of horses etc.) during dreams. No longer weighed down by the ballast of sensations and freed from the yoke of the body, together with all its earthly freights, the soul regains that creative spontaneity which was circumscribed within certain well-defined limits on the waking plane. The objective control which is the very *differentia* of our waking life (barring out the cases of 'play-consciousness' 'imagination' and 'reverie' wherein such control is partially held in abeyance) is here reduced to the minimum and the soul of the dreamer enjoys an 'unchartered freedom' in the matter of creating its own

1 देहेन्द्रियादिष्वहममाभिमानहौनस्य प्रमादत्वानुपपत्तौ प्रमाणप्रवृत्त्यनुपपत्तेः...न चानध्यसात्मभावेन देहेन कश्चित् व्याप्रियते—Sāṃkara's Introduction to the Com. on V.S.

2 जाग्रदृश नाम इन्द्रियजन्यज्ञानावस्था—*Vedānta-paribhāṣā*, chap. VII.

3 इन्द्रियाजन्यविषयगोचरापरोक्षान्तःकरणवृत्त्यवस्था स्वप्नावस्था—*ibid*.

4 न हि इन्द्रियजन्यत्वं प्रत्यक्षत्वे तन्मम्—*Vedānta-paribhāṣā*, chap. I.

5 रथादेः क्षुतिमात्राभ्युपगमे 'रथं पश्यामि' 'स्वप्ने रथमद्राक्षम्' इत्याद्यनुभवविरोधादन्ते—*ibid*.

object. But that is no reason why the dream-world should be discounted as altogether unreal and worthless. My real world—the world of normal waking consciousness—is also, as Śaṅkara<sup>1</sup> and modern philosophy insist alike, a construction, limited in range but none the less indispensable. Thus my waking world does not score a point in advance of my dreaming world on that count alone. Śaṅkara apparently presents the latter in a rather unfavourable light as compared with the former in respect of its truth-value. In commenting on the Vedānta-sūtra<sup>2</sup>—Śaṅkara observes that “the dream-experience is (altogether illusory as it is) not expressive of itself through the instrumentality of the entire set of the qualities of the real. What is here to be understood by the ‘entire set’?—The fulfilment of the conditions of space, time, causality and absence of contradiction. These viz. space, time, causality and absence of contradiction, which are the attributes of the real are not applicable to dreams.”<sup>3</sup>

Now the *paramāṛthavastu* here referred to does not evidently denote the transcendental Reality to which the space-time-casual series is *ipso facto* inapplicable. It means the empirical reality (व्यवहारिकी सत्ता)—the reality of normal waking life—from whose standpoint the verdict of unreality is pronounced on the dream-world. It is interesting to note, in this connection, that Śaṅkara recognises profound discrepancy that exists between the spatial, temporal or causal relations of waking consciousness and those of dream-experience—a discrepancy which necessitates the postulation of a different order of space, time or causal relation. For example, a man sleeping at a particular space perceives (or dreams) to have gone to a place hundreds of miles away from the former and returned forthwith; a man in India retiring to sleep at night-fall, experiences dawn in that

1 Vide his Introduction to the commentary on V. S.

2 माधामावन्तु कात्स्न्यानभिव्यक्तस्वरूपत्वात्—III. 2. iii.

3 न हि कात्स्न्येन परमार्थवस्तुधर्मेणाभिव्यक्तस्वरूपः स्वप्नः । किं पुनरत्र कात्स्न्यामभिप्रेतम् ? देशकालनिमित्तसम्प्रतिरवाधश्च । न हि परमार्थवस्तुविषयाणि देशकालनिमित्तान्वाधश्च स्वप्ने सम्भाव्यते—Com. on V. S. III. 2. iii.

very land: as also does a man frequently experience to have lapsed hundreds of years within the short span of a dream lasting for a moment. If we might parenthetically note here, the emphasis on the phrase 'the dawn in that very land' suggests that Śaṅkara was not perhaps unacquainted with the fact of synchronous day and night in antipodal regions, as is evident from the *Bhāmali*: 'the term *Bhāratabarsha* is specifically used to imply the fact that night in the land of *Bhāratabarsha* is synchronous with day in remote regions like *Ketumāla*' (which is the name for a portion of Jambu island to the west of India). What these dream-experiences unquestionably prove is that in dreams we are granted a far wider range than is possible for us to acquire in the waking life; in other words, the dream-world is wider and more comprehensive, but whether more harmonious as well than the waking world depends on other considerations. It is a pity that Śaṅkara did not evince a scientific interest for, and develop the implications of these, the study of which is so increasingly popular among psychologists of to-day. Perhaps it is the constitutional impatience of the Absolutist with the relative and the conditioned, that prevented him from spinning out further the fabric of unreality. One who would read between the lines would seldom miss that undertone of contempt that runs through his discussions of the problems of psychology or cosmology—the realm of *Māyā* which has only a fugitive semblance of truth. But this impatience, into which he is sometimes betrayed, is not in keeping with the interest he has taken in an earlier section of his commentary. 'The dream creations,' as he has observed in that reference, 'although sublated as being unreal (from the standpoint of waking life), the resulting consciousness persists as real; for such a *consciousness* is not sublated on waking.'<sup>1</sup> Here the issue is mainly epistemological; but the psychological side-issue cannot be ignored. So far as it is a

1 यद्यपि स्वप्नदर्शनावस्थस्य सर्पदंशनोदकक्षानादिकार्यमनृतं तथापि सत्यमेव भूत् प्रतिबुद्धस्याप्यवाध्यमानत्वात् । नहि स्वप्नादुत्थितः स्वप्नदृष्टं सर्पदंशनोदकक्षानादिकार्यं मिथ्येति मन्यमानस्तदवगतिमपि मिथ्येति मन्यते कश्चित्—Com. on V. S. II. 1. xiv.

*fact* of consciousness (अवगतिः)—no matter whether it is a consciousness of things that are subsequently pronounced to be unreal—it has got to be accounted for psychologically. True it is that Śaṅkara has attempted a psychological account elsewhere, e.g. in his commentary on the *Māṇḍūkya* but everywhere the treatment is perfunctory—possibly under the controlling lead of his absolutistic prepossessions. The mere mention of occasional concurrences or coherences of dream-phenomena with those of waking consciousness,<sup>1</sup> and of the power of prognosticating real phenomena (i.e. those of waking life), does not retrieve the situation. In strict justice to Śaṅkara, it must, however, be admitted that some of his observations in this context are eminently suggestive from the psychological point of view. The dream-phenomena are called unreal, because they remain unto the last amorphous or indeterminate (अनभिव्यक्तस्वरूपः) owing, to the absence of a spatio-temporal order which is, for anything we know, the only medium of empirical reality. As compared with concrete objects of waking experience, the dream-objects must, therefore, be somewhat abstract, sketchy or shadowy, and thus come to be regarded as unreal. The distinction may be further elucidated by saying that unlike waking experience, where the objects are given to us from without and ‘strike upon’ the mind in the Humean sense, in dream-consciousness the dream-objects are created *pari passu* with the very act of dreaming; or to vary the language, creating the mind dreams, and dreaming it creates. Excepting this difference in respect of an original datum or of a felt immediacy there is no such grave disparity as would justify a difference in kind between waking and dream-consciousness.

Again, by way of eliciting the philosophical significance of the scriptural texts referring to the creation of ‘chariots,’ etc., Śaṅkara proceeds to observe: “The dream (-psychology) has been propounded with a view to clearly discerning the self-revealing character of the percipient self which is always

<sup>1</sup> e.g. in his commentary on II. 1. xiv and III. 2. iv.

difficult to discriminate on account of its concomitance in waking life with objective sense-contact and an illuminating agency like the sun. Had there been no *Śruti* texts bearing on the creation of 'chariots' etc., the self-revealing character (of the self) would not have been determined."<sup>1</sup> The constant conjunction of the self with empirical objects on the waking plane may engender the supposition that self-consciousness is conditioned by, or dependent on, the consciousness of objects. The dream-consciousness has its efficacy so far as it dispels the misconception (by abstracting the self from the empirical objects) in accordance with a methodological principle which seems to be very similar to Mill's 'Method of Difference.' The principle as formulated by *Bhāmati* runs thus: "What persists, others being excluded, is different from those others, just as the thread is different from the flowers (it strings together)."<sup>2</sup> This clearly proves that self-consciousness is not contingent upon the empirical modes nor is the correlative thereof, but is essentially self-manifest (स्वयंप्रकाशम्).

It is in the treatment of dreamless sleep (सुषुप्तिः), the third stage of the soul, that there is the total extinction of the empirical life along with the distinction of subject and object. This does not, however, amount to an extinction of consciousness as well; for, such a supposition is directly negated by the remembrance of peaceful repose of such sleep on waking (सुखमहमस्माप्सम्). This fact of remembrance unmistakably proves the direct experience or perception of such a repose by the self during dreamless sleep; for memory can be only of a past presentation. This conclusion has however been contested on the ground that it is not a case of *bona fide* recollection of a past perceived state, but is a case of inference, pure and simple. What we know (here by inference) is not a presentation or consciousness of nothing determinate or parti-

<sup>1</sup> अपि च जागरिते विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगादादित्यादिज्योतिर्भूतिकराद्यात्मनः स्वयंज्योतिर्द्रष्टुर्द्रष्टव्यमिति तद्विवेचनाय स्वप्न उपपन्नः। तत्र यदि रथादिद्रष्टव्यमत्र नुत्या नीत्येतस्वयंज्योतिर्द्रष्टुं न शक्नोति तस्मात्—Com. on V. S. III. 2. iv.

<sup>2</sup> येषु व्यावर्त्यमानेषु यदनुवर्तते तत्तेभ्यो भिन्नम्। यथा सुसुप्तेभ्यः स्वम्।

cular, but only the absence of knowledge and the perpetual wear and tear of the waking and, to some extent, of the dreaming life as well, in deep sleep. Thus, on waking we have the memory of the state before we retired to sleep and have perception of the state after the sleep—by comparing which we infer the absence of knowledge and other attendant distractions of the self during the *ad interim* period of deep sleep. Śaṅkara rejects this explanation as illogical and unscientific. Inference is impossible, so it is argued, in a case like this which is unique of its kind and the exemplar of itself; for, all inference is possible only on the basis of observed facts, and thus we can infer nothing the like of which was never presented in our experience. But, then, if it be argued that the absence of all determinate knowledge during deep sleep being, after all, a negative concept cannot be presented but has got to be inferred, Śaṅkara would meet the argument by saying that you cannot infer the “absence” in question unless you can conceive it, and to be able to conceive you must have a prior perception thereof. Thus the absence of knowledge cannot be referred to, or even mentioned excepting so far as there is a direct consciousness of it during such absence.

Now that the persistence of self in dreamless sleep is established, the question that crops up is: ‘What is the nature of the self in that state?’ Śaṅkara answers the query by quoting a *Śruti* text which holds that the soul, when in deep sleep and not dreaming dwells in these i.e. *nāḍīs* or veins; eventually the soul becomes one with the vital principle (प्राणाः) The text does not hereby stand committed to the doctrine of ‘subconscious mind’ or of organic memory as maintaining the continuity of mental life, or of consciousness as being the by-product of physiological processes. All these conjectures are nipped in the bud by Śaṅkara’s assurance, and that on the authority of the relevant Vedānta-sūtra itself, that the word *prāṇa* is the equivalent or synonym of Brahman or the Absolute. But there is no denying the fact that the text in question is bent upon assigning the physiological seat of such union of the soul with Brahman. It compares, not unfavour-

ably, with the desperate attempts made by Western philosophers to locate the soul—some in the heart, some in the brain, some in the pineal gland, and so on. What the net result of such localisation is, or what service it renders to the cause of psychology, these thinkers do not stop to inquire. Śaṅkara, however, has not thought it worth his while to waste his ingenuity over questions of this kind, in as much as they were found to subserve no scientific interest whatsoever.<sup>1</sup> What is of psychological as well as metaphysical importance is the recognition of dreamless sleep as the plane of Ātman which alone is waking reality (आत्मैव सुप्तिस्थानम्)<sup>2</sup>. The outstanding characteristic of the self in that state is the sublation of all determinate knowledge (विशेषविज्ञानोपशमलक्षणं सुषुप्तम्)<sup>3</sup>; and thus the soul seems to regain that original purity and self-sufficiency from which there was a temporary lapse owing to its association with limiting adjuncts of the waking and dreaming life.<sup>4</sup> Freed from all limitations the soul realises its oneness with Brahman who is undifferentenced consciousness and bliss; and thus shines like Kant's 'Good Will,' that has its whole value and *raison d'être* in itself. The concept of bliss that we come across in the third state is at best negative; hence the necessity of the *Turiya* or the fourth state of the soul, which is supposed to be positive bliss itself. Although, there is in dreamless sleep (सुषुप्तिः) the absence of all determinate knowledge, the self persists as subject to witness or illumine this absence itself, this blank or nothing; in the ecstatic consciousness, however, it breaks through the last vestige of subject-object consciousness and becomes the absolute—a state of which it can truly be said: 'यदा त सर्वमात्मैवाभूत् तदा केन कं विज्ञानोयात्.' i.e., 'when, however, all melt into one Ātman, who knows what?'

<sup>1</sup> न हि नाड्यः सुप्तिस्थानं पुरीतश्चेत्यनेन विज्ञानेन किञ्चित् प्रयोजनमस्ति—Com. on V. S. III. 2. vii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> स्वप्नजागरितयोस्तूपाधिसम्पर्कवशात् परस्वपापत्तिमिवापेक्ष्य तदुपशममात्रात् सुषुप्ते स्वस्वपापत्तिर्विवक्ष्यते—*Ibid.*

The points raised in connection with the status of the self in dream and dreamless sleep, afford instructive comparison with the corresponding doctrines of certain typical thinkers in the West. Kant, for example, starts in his epistemological analysis with a sense-manifold, as Saṃkara does with sense-contact (विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगः). It is only when such manifold has been furnished by sensibility that the activity and spontaneity of the soul can be ascertained in the synthesis of the manifold, which alone can convert such manifold into the texture of knowledge. The 'transcendental unity of apperception' which, according to Kant, accompanies all our representations in the form of 'I think,' appears only as the epistemological correlate of the object—a penumbra or shadowy image of the object. With all his emphasis on the subjective side, Kant could not, it must be admitted, secure an independent status for the self. It might be contended, however, that the self or subject in the Kantian analysis of the epistemological situation is only a thought or logical concept merely, and to present it as an entity or soul-substance is a 'Paralogism of Pure Reason.' When all is said and done, it must be admitted that Kant left it in an unstable equilibrium, and, therefore, an advance beyond it was inevitable. The transcendental Unity of Apperception was thus seized on its metaphysical side by Fichte, not as a fact but as an *act* (*Thatandlung*) and by the semi-Kantians and Neo-Kantians of the Marburg School on the psychological side and presented as pure activity. Saṃkara too has more or less in the manner of Kant presented the self as the unity of the ego or as the correlate of every specific act of cognition (सर्वप्रत्ययदर्शी चिच्छक्तिस्वरूपमात्मनः). This trend of thought is more fully brought out in another famous context<sup>1</sup> which runs thus: "The repetition 'to a presentation' 'to a presentation' signifies its (*i.e.* of the *Ātman*) inter-penetration of all presentations.... The inward self which is revealed as the manifesting agent of all determinate acts of cognition is the *Brahman*—that is truth, that is adequate knowledge, which is the knowl-

<sup>1</sup> Com. on *Kena Upanishad*, II. 4.



edge of the inward self, not the knowledge of the object.”<sup>1</sup> The standing difficulty in the way of our apprehending this pure self-manifest *chaitanyam* is the halting superstition that knowledge is produced by sensations. In dreamless sleep it, of course, reveals itself in its essential nature as self-manifest (स्वप्रकाशम्).. The place of dreamless sleep in a metaphysical rendering of experience probably appeared too slippery a ground for Kant, and so he preferred to stick to his transcendental Unity of Apperception—the ‘dark lantern’ that illumines the whole world except itself.

Such a pure manifestation of the self is confessedly at variance with the Hegelian point of view, according to which all empirical manifestation is not a meaningless contingency, but a necessary phase in the self-revelation of the Absolute Spirit. The Absolute Spirit is not a pure analytic unity of consciousness, in relation to which all synthetic determination is contingent, but is an Analytico-Synthetic unity into which difference necessarily enters. Hence in the characteristic language of Hegel all empirical and synthetic determination is only the analytic explication of its Idea—its self-evolution and self-explication. Śaṅkara does indeed recognise the inherent psychological difficulty of grasping the status of pure Self. ‘The self (in dreamless sleep),’ says Śaṅkara, ‘appears as unconscious, not on account of the absence of consciousness, but of the objects of consciousness; just as the light pervading space is not apparent owing to the absence of things to be illuminated, not owing to the lapse of its nature.’<sup>2</sup> But he does not attempt to get over the difficulty by cutting the Gordian knot instead of untying it.

The characteristic of ‘absence of contradiction’ (अवाधः, अवाधितत्वम्) is, however, less psychological and more distinctly epistemological. No *prima facie* case can be made out against

1 बोधं प्रति बोधं प्रति इति वीक्ष्या सर्वप्रत्ययव्याप्तायां । ...प्रतिबोधावभासप्रत्यगात्मकतया यद्विदितं तद्वन्न, तदेवं नतं तदेवसम्यग्ज्ञानं यत् प्रत्यगात्मविज्ञानम्, न विषयविज्ञानम् !

2 विषयाभावादियमचेतयमानता न चेतन्याभावादिति । यथा विद्यदाश्रयस्य प्रकाशस्य प्रकाश्याभावादनभिर्व्यक्तिर्न स्वभावात् तद्वत्—Com. on V. S. II. 3. xviii.

dreams that they are wholly illusory or are figments of imagination merely. Each is true within itself (स्वविषयेऽपि सत्यं सत्यमेव) and each of the dreaming and waking worlds is unreal only in relation to a beyond. None is real absolutely but while 'the cosmic phenomena, such as *ākāśa* (आकाशः) etc. are seen to have a stable character until the oneness of the Self with Brahman is attained, the dream-phenomena are daily sublated.'<sup>1</sup> Thus the unreality (मायामात्रत्वम्) of dreams is not to be construed in an absolute sense. Dreams are true so long as they last, and they are called unreal relatively to the objects of waking life, not absolutely (जाग्रद्विषयापेक्षं तदवृत्तत्वं न सत्यः). This shows the more or less arbitrary or conventional nature of the distinction that we draw between the waking and dream worlds. Thus the hard and fast line of demarcation that is usually drawn between the two worlds will have to give way to a difference in degree, and ultimately in value. What we may profitably note here is the continuity between the four grades of consciousness, despite the emergence of real difference in each. To sum up, then, the net result of our foregoing inquiry, in the words of a profound Vedāntic scholar: "Waking, dream, dreamless sleep, and ecstasy with the intermediate stages constitute, then, *a new dimension of the mind*. This is not only *a* dimension of the mind but *the* one dimension of existence in which even the deepest of all distinctions viz. that between the subject and the object, has place. The ordinarily conceived duality between them gives place in Vedānta to the conception of a gradation of existences, one pole of which is the lowest waking stage in which the self completely forgets itself, the stage of the mere object, and the other pole, the ecstatic stage in which the self not only denies the existence of everything else but denies the denial itself, the stage of the pure subject. The gradation is not eternally spread out; the *Samādhi* state is not only a stage among stages, it is the truth of other stages...The self as identified with any stage, feels the stage below it to be illusory;

\* 1 प्राक् च ब्रह्मात्मदर्शनाद् विषयादिप्रपञ्चोव्यवस्थितरूपो भवति सम्भ्यायस्तु प्रपञ्चः प्रतिदिनं बाध्यते—Com. on V. S. III. 2. iv.

thus there is a reconciliation between the absolute distinction of truth and untruth on the one hand, and the continuous gradations of truth on the other.<sup>1</sup>

Thus it is easy to conclude, in the light of the above, that the state of ecstatic consciousness, or what is the same thing, Revelation, does not entail a breach in the continuity of our conscious existence. Although the very entrance into that consummate experience—the state of pure subject—necessitates a surrender of the subject-object relation, it is not a mere nebulous state of consciousness. This very surrender of the active knowing attitude is, admittedly, responsible for its being classed with irrational or pathological phenomena of the mind. That is why, again, Revelation is so often looked upon as an ‘illumination from the above,’ an ‘act of Divine grace’ working in an inscrutable manner in us, and baffling for ever the power of reason. Here is the by-path of anti-intellectualism or irrationalism, which so often exploits reason in an agnostic interest, and accentuates the contrast between Theoretical and Practical Reason, Faith and Knowledge, by antagonising reason to Authority as the custodian of revealed truths which are supposed to be beyond, above and even contrary to reason.

There are undoubtedly passages in Śaṅkara’s writings which lend themselves to a dualistic interpretation. His frequent appeal to the authority of the *Śāstras* or *Śruti* (श्रुतिप्रामाण्यम्) and exaltation of it at the expense of *Tarka* (तर्कः) or reasoning do presuppose a contrast between the two. But, here, too ‘the contrast is really between the private consciously acting reason of the individual and the historic reason in which is summed up the experience of the race.’ Śaṅkara’s acceptance of individual reason (एकवचनतिः) as essentially a disintegrative force, leading in the end to an overthrow of all rational practice or usage (सर्वलोकव्यवहारोच्छेदप्रसंगः), has a decidedly anti-rationalistic tone about it, but he does not happily act up to the *recipe* prescribed by the anti-rationalist. Śaṅkara seems to accept the homœopathic principle of cure, so far as he retains the service of

<sup>1</sup> K. C. Bhattacharyya, *Studies in Vedantism*, pp. 16-17.

reason in matters spiritual. It is of course hedged in with conditions, so that it may not go astray, but conduce to the attainment of the *Summum bonum*. Mere 'arid dialectic' or 'unbridled reasoning' (निरंकुशतर्कः) is an unmitigated evil, and, as such, abjured. Nor is uncriticised faith or acquiescence in the revealed doctrines valued for its own sake ; for the *Śruti* itself has insistently recommended *manana* (मननं) or discursive thinking as the necessary supplement to the passive reception (श्रवणम्) of scriptural texts. This *manana* has been authoritatively defined as 'the mental act, which leads to knowledge by way of arguments, defending the truths embodied in revealed texts, against objections likely to be preferred by other sources of knowledge.'<sup>1</sup> It is thus as much a process of rationalisation, as an anticipatory refutation of objections. In its turn it leads to, and acts as a precondition of the next process known as *nididhyāsana* (निदिध्यासनम्), whose function is to facilitate that type of mental activity which is calculated to a concentration upon self-knowledge, following upon the withdrawal of the psychical apparatus from its beginningless attachment to objects.<sup>2</sup> Thus it is only reasoned acceptance of the scriptural texts (श्रुतिवाक्याणि), as strengthened by an inward concentration, demanded by the process of *nididhyāsana* (निदिध्यासनम्) or persistent contemplation, that can lead to revelation or immediate experience of Brahman (ब्रह्मसाक्षात्कारः), the supreme object of our quest.

The privileged life of thinking and critical reflexion,—through which alone, as the pathway to blessedness, humanity has travelled for ages—does, however, entail its peculiar disciplines on the person who would qualify himself for it (अधिकारी) The right to think, to know and be free, has to be achieved—not without sacrifice and purification of the heart ; and it is the 'pure in heart' that alone 'see God.'<sup>3</sup> Thinking is thus to be preceded by a moral effort ; and the will to think conditioned

1 मननं नाम शब्दावधारितेऽर्थे मानान्तरविरोधशकायां तन्निराकरणानुकूलतर्कान्तक-  
ज्ञानजनकमानसव्यापारः.—*Vedānta-paribhāṣā*, Chap. VIII.

\* 2 निदिध्यासनं नाम अनादिदुर्व्यासनया विषयेष्वाज्ञाप्यमाद्यस्य चिन्तस्य विषयेभ्योऽपकृष्य  
आत्मविषयकखैर्यानुकूलो मानसव्यापारः.—*Ibid.*

by a will to believe. Accordingly, we have in the Vedānta a frequent insistence on the reformed or purified mind (संस्कृतं मनः) as the organ of immediate experience or revelation of Brahman.<sup>1</sup> Śaṅkara is frankly of opinion that the study of metaphysics should in all cases be preceded by a propædæutic discipline in the social ethos. It is only an arrogant rationalism that sets up extravagant claims in the matter of solving the riddles of the Sphinx with the help of its own unaided reason. Although relying on reason, so far as the metaphysical discipline is concerned, Śaṅkara, like Plato, recognised with unerring philosophic insight the service of 'unconscious' reason' as embodied in customary morals and cultural *milieu* in general, and thus, got beyond Socratic individualism. According to Śaṅkara, the disciplines in question are four in number. In the first instance there must be a knowledge of the distinction between things eternal and non-eternal (नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेकः). It is *prima facie* impossible for the student, called to the study of the Vedānta, to be equipped with a full-fledged 'knowledge' of this type: all that is demanded of him is 'the metaphysical craving of the soul' which does not allow the philosophic inquirer to stop short of the goal, but as 'the discontent Divine' ever goads him on to probe deeper beyond the surface show of things. The second pre-requisite or *sādhana* (साधनम्) is a 'complete apathy' or 'indifference to the enjoyment of the fruits of one's actions, whether here (in this life) or hereafter (in the life to come) (इहामुवफलभोगविरागः). What is meant here is that the philosophic inquirer must renounce all self-centred considerations, and approach his task with perfect disinterestedness. For interest congenital or otherwise, that predisposes the intellect with any definite bias, and thus blurs the vision of truth, is a serious disqualification in a seeker after truth. The cultivation of this spirit of detachment or indifference stands him in very good stead, when the student is confronted with such specific problems of life as the relation of happiness to the *summum bonum*

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1 ब्रह्मसाक्षात्कारोपि मनननिदिध्यासनसंस्कृतमन एव करणम्—Vedānta-paribhāṣā, Chap. VIII.

of human life. If the philosophic inquirer does not profess mere lip-loyalty to this injunction, he will avert the mishap that befell Kant in his philosophic career. There we find the rigoristic preacher of 'duty for duty's sake,' who had scrupulously expunged all considerations of happiness from the moral life, staggering us by the baldly hedonistic lines on which he rounds off his theory—namely 'the distribution of happiness in exact proportion to morality (which is the worth of a person and his worthiness to be happy) constitutes the *summum bonum* of a possible world.'<sup>1</sup> Such tragedy of moral purism inculcates the supreme necessity of a spirit of disinterestedness as a philosophical pre-requisite. Although negative in formulation, it is not barely so but acquires, in practice, 'the expulsive power of a higher affection.' It is, in short, a preparation for that disinterested intellectual curiosity which characterises the genuine scientific temper—a well-grounded plea for that cosmo-centric point of view in philosophy which, by thrusting aside all anthropocentric considerations, enables us to view things in their cosmic perspective. It is remarkable, indeed, that Mr. Bertrand Russell following an altogether different approach to philosophy, substantially agrees with Saṃkara on this point, and places 'desire' under a ban as being 'the last prison-house of the intellect.' The third discipline in the list is made up of six minor ones which are of a more practical character and thus fittingly to be called *sādhana-sampat* (साधनसम्पत्). They are respectively :— 'tranquillity' or 'control of mind' (अमः), 'restraint of the external organs' (दमः), 'renunciation' or 'detachment' (उपरतिः), 'patience' (तिरिचि), 'peaceful repose of the mind' (समाधानम्) and 'faith' (श्रद्धा). These disciplines are expected to bring about a complete change of heart—a Platonic 'turning round of the eye of the soul.' The fourth and the last is the desire or longing for liberation from bondage (मुमुक्षुत्वम्), which is the tacit presupposition of the three other disciplines and the immediate pre-condition of the philosophic impulse.

<sup>1</sup> Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* (Abbot's edition p. 206).

The question of faith or belief (श्रद्धा) as a metaphysical discipline recoils upon the central theme of this lecture. It stands apparently in a hostile relation to reason which is accepted as the only organ of philosophic thinking. Like the 'old feud between poetry and philosophy,' faith *versus* reason has proved to be the family quarrel of a divided house as old as the Mediæval philosophy. We are not concerned here with an historic orientation of this ancient strife. If all knowledge, according to Advaita-Vedānta is revelation; that is to say, a manifestation and not an absolute production, of that Âtman which is of the very stuff of intelligence or knowledge (विज्ञानस्वरूपः, बोधस्वरूपः) is eternally accomplished (नित्यनिर्द्वन्द्वः), then the function of philosophy is to interpret and rationalise Revelation. This is not, however, an attempt to square the circle, for all opposition between the two is initially disarmed. But in order that the philosophical inquiry may be set on foot, some kind of provisional belief (श्रद्धा) is necessary. Such a belief is induced by *Sabda* (शब्दः) or *Āgama* (आगमः) as the Word or *lógos*—functioning not as an extra-philosophical authority but as the collective spiritual experience of the race. Every judgment or proposition (वाक्यम्) to which the Vedāntic judgments form no exception, is the embodiment of a meaning, and all meanings are objective in embodiment of a meaning, and all meanings are objective in the sense that they have no special reference to any individual consciousness. Belief is, undoubtedly, the acceptance of a judgment as true by some individual consciousness. Now, belief, whatever else it might be, is not knowledge. That being so, to start with belief in the *Śruti* texts betrays an uncritical, and for the matter of that, an unphilosophical frame of mind. But such belief, although not knowledge itself, is at least continuous with it. It is thus anticipatory knowledge or revelation, and has its sole justification in what it leads to. It is only a cheap gnosticism or hypercritical scepticism that presumes to do without such a basis of philosophy. "Philosophy" says Bradley, 'demands and in the end it rests on, what may fairly be termed faith. It has, we may say, in a sense to presuppose its conclusion in order to prove it. It tacitly assumes something in

general to be true in order to carry this general truth out in detail.”<sup>1</sup> Without running counter to sound epistemology, Śaṅkara, it is to be noted carefully, accepts the priority of faith to reason ‘as a purifier of the heart, as subduing human passion, as illuminating the intellect and thus disposing man to make a prudent and reverent use of his reason in contact with the revealed mysteries of faith.’<sup>2</sup>

The Viśiṣṭādvaita School of Rāmānuja unreservedly accepts the authority of the scriptures (आगमप्रामाण्यम्). The knowledge of a supreme Reality is to be had, according to Rāmānuja, only through the *śāstrās*—a position which follows from a literal carrying out of the *sūtra śāstrayonitvāt* (शास्त्रयोनित्वात्). Although reason is brought into requisition for a justification of the scriptures, it is the latter that are hailed as the sole repository of knowledge regarding the realm beyond the senses. On a judicious estimate of the respective positions of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja on this point it appears that Rāmānuja is more of a Revelationist than Śaṅkara. Whether in the conferring of authoritativeness (आगमप्रामाण्यम्) on *smṛtis* and the epics, on mere *aitihya* (ऐतिह्यम्) or tradition, or in crowning the apparatus of knowledge with continuous meditation partaking of the character of devotion (भक्तिः)<sup>3</sup>, this tendency is clearly noticeable.

To sum up, therefore, philosophy may be said, from the standpoint of Advaita-Vedānta, to have its beginning and end in Revelation. It is impersonal to begin with, and is personal in the end. It begins with *Śruti* (श्रुतिः) and ends in *Anubhūti* (अनुभूतिः), thereby making the spiritual heritage of mankind a personal possession.\* Viewed thus, the attitude of faith or *śraddhā* (श्रद्धा) bespeaks a frame of mind far from unphilosophical. It is rather the recognition of the all-important consideration that truth cannot be created but only recognised, and such recognition of truth is only made possible by the *Śruti*. If, as we believe, it is spirit that bears witness to spirit, it is

1 *Essays on Truth and Reality*, Chap. I. p. 15.

2 P. Coffey, *Epistemology*, Vol. II.

3 तैलधारवद्विच्छिन्न-श्रुतिसन्तानरूपा भक्तिशब्देनाभिधीयते—Śreebhāṣhya, I. 1. i.



*Śruti* as the living embodiment of intuitions of seers, handing on the torch of illumination from age to age, that alone can be the teacher in matters pertaining to the spirit. It is to this pressure of the Universal upon the individual that philosophy owes its individuality as well as vitality. Philosophy is but such corporate experience brought to a luminous personal focus.

## LECTURE IV.

### AN APPROACH THROUGH EPISTEMOLOGY.

If, as we are concerned to maintain, philosophy depends in the end upon faith, it is nevertheless a faith that *enquires*. The priority or primacy of faith in this regard does in no way compromise the position of reason or dispense with the necessity of reasoning altogether. Reason or *tarka* (तर्कः) is employed to act as an intermediary or principal agency in translating the impersonal historical certitude of *Śruti* into the certitude of personal experience. The entire process may thus be viewed as a personalisation of faith. It has been rightly remarked, therefore, that 'the human mind is so constituted that only intrinsic evidence necessarily compels assent. No matter how great the authority of the witness, assent is impossible unless the truth in question is luminous to us, is felt as such by us.'<sup>1</sup> This explains the justified emphasis on an epistemological approach to the metaphysics of the Vedānta. It is here that we have a foretaste of the Vedāntic method, which studiously avoids, alike, the aberrations of Dogmatism and Criticism. Thinking always proceeds by questioning experience, and unless there be in evidence this questioning spirit or *jijñāsā* (जिज्ञासा) the pursuit of truth becomes an impossibility. *Jijñāsā* (जिज्ञासा) has, therefore, not only an abiding value for pedagogics, but a plain epistemological meaning. Accordingly, the very first *sūtra* of Bādarāyaṇa—'then, therefore, an enquiry into Brahman' (अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा)—may in all fairness be taken as being symptomatic of a philosophic frame of mind. The term *jijñāsā* (जिज्ञासा) can hardly be rendered by its supposed English equivalent 'enquiry': it is far more radical in its significance than what is implied in the bare act of enquiry, comprehending, as it does, within its scope 'the whole process from its mental

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<sup>1</sup> Coffey, *Epistemology*, Vol. II.

inception of the act in desire to the accomplishment<sup>1</sup> of the intended result in knowledge.<sup>1</sup> It is thus only that the integrity and philosophical importance of *jijñāsā* can be sustained.

What does this *jijñāsā*, then, signify? By *jijñāsā*, the author of the *sūtra* suggests, as the *Bhāmali* declares, a 'doubt' and a 'value' that is an object of our quest (जिज्ञासायाः संदेहप्रयोजने सूचयति). Thus, the enquiry (जिज्ञासा) is the *ratio cognoscendi* of doubt, while doubt is the *ratio essendi* of enquiry.<sup>2</sup> And it is this very doubt that gives the impulse to philosophic enquiry (संशयस्य लोभासारम् प्रयोजयति). "The doubt here" as Bradley truly observes, "is not smothered or expelled but itself is assimilated and used up. It becomes an element in the living process of that which is above doubt, and hence its own development is the end of itself in its original character."<sup>3</sup> Wonder, said Plato, is the parent of all philosophy while doubt, according to Descartes, is the beginning of philosophical thinking. Both refer, although by means of different designations, to the same inquisitive attitude of the mind in which we have the psychological genesis of philosophy. The Cartesian doubt, it is instructive to note, is simply a methodological discipline, a precept rather than a doctrine, a solvent brought to bear on the problem of philosophic certitude. In point of fact, the Cartesian doubt is only a make-believe. If, however, it be regarded as genuine, and not something fictitious, it cannot be universalised, as was done by Descartes. Universal doubt leads nowhere, and without a violation of reasoning it can never lead to certitude. If doubt be universal, why stop, we might pertinently ask, at the *cogito ergo sum*? This is not the place to attempt a detailed criticism of the principle '*de omnibus dubitandum est*' and the basal truths it leads to. His '*cogito*' has been justly made the unhappy target of criticisms by the Hegelian school. The 'I' of his 'I think' could not, on his own showing, be identified with the self—what James

<sup>1</sup> अवगतिपर्यन्तं ज्ञानं समाप्तायाः इच्छायाः कार्यम्—Com. on V.S. I. 1. i.

<sup>2</sup> जिज्ञासातु संशयस्य कार्यमिति स्वकारणं सूचयति—*Bhāmali* on Com. on V.S.

I. 1. i.

<sup>3</sup> *Essays on Truth and Reality*, pp. 17-8.

would call the psychological 'Me'—for which he mistook it. His doubt having destroyed the whole content of consciousness, his 'cogito' degenerated into an abstract possibility merely, a bare potentiality of thinking. I think;—but what?—there being no object of thought, the thinking in question remains an unverifiable hypothesis merely. It is true that Descartes has sought to justify the demand that all else being denied the denier remains, that in the event of there being nothing there must be one to conceive this nothing. But he misinterprets this demand, so far as he construes it as a proof of the existence of the denier, of the doubting or the thinking ego. Śaṅkara manipulating a somewhat similar argument avoids the pitfall to which Descartes succumbed. In a well-known passage the argument is thus introduced: 'Just because it is the self, it is impossible for us to entertain the possibility of its ever being conjured away or refuted. For (the knowledge of) the self is not with anybody something adventitious, it being self-evident or self-established.'<sup>1</sup> The argument, however, is rounded off with the words: 'such (a self-established entity) is incapable of being repudiated or abstracted, but not that which is the essential nature (of him who repudiates or abstracts). The agent of repudiation or abstraction is the essential nature of him who repudiates or abstracts.'<sup>2</sup> Śaṅkara has in another context a string of verses designed for the determination of the true nature of the self ( स्वात्मनिरूपणम् ) and has reproduced the same argument with an added significance: 'If a man has doubt as to the fact that he exists, he is to reckon in that connexion that the doubter is no other than his own self.'<sup>3</sup>

1 आत्मत्वादेवात्मनो निराकरणाशङ्कानुपपत्तिः । न ह्यात्मागन्तुकः कस्यचित् स्वथसिद्धत्वात्  
—Com. on V.S. II. 3. vii.

2 न चेदृशस्य निराकरणं सम्भवति । आगन्तुकं हि वस्तु निराक्रियते न स्वरूपम् ।  
य एव हि निराकर्ता तदेव तस्य स्वरूपम् ।—*Ibid.*

3 "अस्ति स्वयमित्यन्विन्नर्थे कस्यास्ति संशयः दुःसः ।

तच्चापि संशयश्चेत्संशयिता यः स एव भवति त्वम् ॥"—स्वात्मनिरूपणम् ॥ ४ ॥

Such a self, according to Śaṅkara, is the correlate of the object (विषयः) and continuous therewith ; as revealed by subject-consciousness (अव्यक्तप्रत्ययगोचरः) or the 'I-consciousness,' the inward self (प्रत्यगात्मा) in its true character as the eternal subject (अविषयः) or witness (साक्षी) forgets or forsakes its own nature, and comes to be adumbrated somehow in the empirical series, by virtue of that endless, innate, delusive process of superimposition known as *adhyāsa* (अध्यासः). The inward self which, according to Śaṅkara, is the eternal witness of all the modifications of the producer of the notion of self-hood (*viz.*, the internal organ or अन्तःकरणम्)<sup>1</sup> may be defined as the Self of self, consciousness of consciousness itself, or in other words, Self-consciousness. Such a self is essentially self-manifest (स्वयंप्रकाशः), self-revealing and self-revealed. As eternal, timeless *chaitanya* (चैतन्यम्), it is self-evidencing and self-evident ; and its existence can be demonstrated only negatively by a *reductio ad absurdum*. Of such a self it can truly be said that it exists only as it thinks and that it thinks always (तः नित्यचैतन्योऽयमात्मा), as Śaṅkara says explicitly.<sup>2</sup> But Descartes equates such a self to the individual soul or mind that thinks always (*mens semper cogitat*), thereby exposing himself to the justified criticism of Locke that the child (as the potential man) should think even in the mother's womb. A similar charge of lapse in the continuity of self or consciousness on the basis of such evident lapses in consciousness as swoon (मूर्च्छा) and dreamless sleep (सुषुप्तिः) in which there is an apparent breach in the psychic continuum, could not be urged against Śaṅkara ; for, as it has been already shown, the self or consciousness (आत्मा or चैतन्यम्), of which Śaṅkara speaks, is not dependent for its existence on any physical apparatus, which is simply its manifesting vehicle. This is a point on which the greatest thinkers of the world, breaking down the barriers of age and clime—thinkers like Socrates and Plato, Hegel and Śaṅkara—concur fully. In a remarkable passage which could be assigned to Śaṅkara with no loss of meaning,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Introduction to *Vedāntasūtras*.

<sup>2</sup> Com. on V.S. II. 3. xviii.

Green the accredited English exponent of Neo-Hegelianism, observes: "We are in our very essential nature the eternal consciousness reproduced under limitations of time and animal organism, but retaining the essential character of being out of time, as regards our knowledge, as regards that in virtue of which we are men. The potential content of our consciousness—knowledge—eternally exists in us as ideas which we laboriously attain unto. What exists potentially we try to realise or actualise. What we call our mental history is not history of this (eternally complete) consciousness which in itself can have no history, but a history of the process by which the animal organism becomes its vehicle."<sup>1</sup> In his commentary on a well-known text,<sup>2</sup> Śaṅkara emphatically declares that it is only the Self, as immutable and uncreated consciousness, that shines forth, as also held by the Śruti texts such as '*satyam jñānāmanantam Brahma*' '*prajñānam Brahma*' etc.<sup>3</sup>

That this was the main drift of Śaṅkara-Vedānta appears from two significant passages, the first of which runs thus: the entire aggregate of (empirical) objects being abstracted or denied, what remains is the inward Self as the mere subject (which can never become an object) and there the philosophic impulse finds a final resting-place.<sup>4</sup> The other passage is that famous one in which he is equally emphatic: "The existence of Brahman, again, is known from the fact of its being the Self of every one. For every one is conscious of the existence of (one's) Self, and never thinks 'I am not.' If the existence of the Self were not known, everyone would think 'I am not.' And this Self is 'Brahman.'"<sup>5</sup> The Cartesian method which is

<sup>1</sup> Fairbrother's Green, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> *Praśna Upanishad*, VI. 2.

<sup>3</sup> अमपायोपजनधर्मकचेतनमात्मैव नामरूपाद्युपाधिधर्मैः प्रत्यवभासते 'सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म' 'प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म' इत्यादि.

<sup>4</sup> समस्तस्य विषयजातस्य प्रतिषेधादविषयः प्रत्यगात्मा ब्रह्मेति जिज्ञासा निवर्तते. —Com. on V.S. III. 2. xxiii.

<sup>5</sup> सर्वस्यात्मत्वाच्चब्रह्मात्मित्वप्रसिद्धिः । सर्वोच्चात्मास्मिन् प्रत्येति न नाहमस्मीति । यदि हि नात्मात्मित्वप्रसिद्धिः स्यात् सर्वो ह्यस्मीति नाहमस्मीति प्रतीयतात् —Com. on V.S. I. 1. i.

the method of abstraction has been employed by Śaṅkara as well. By abstracting all objects of thought from the individual thinker, the self of the 'cogito,' Descartes had reduced it to an abstraction merely, and rendered it abortive. 'But the method of 'neti' (नेति), 'neti' (नेति) or 'not this' 'not this'—the *via negativa* as it has also been called—is the only method Śaṅkara could adopt in characterising that trans-subjective subject which is indicated by the term 'Brahman.'<sup>1</sup> The Being that emerges in the rarefied, stifling atmosphere of the freezing heights, as the terminus of an upward movement is not the 'Intense Inane,' the residuum of a thread-bare logic-chopping, or the relic of Scholastic metaphysics, but the quintessence of all reality, the Truth of all truths (सत्यस्य सत्यम्). "If the *via negativa* or method of abstraction were to land us in sheer emptiness, in a metaphysical blank or non-entity, would it (in all propriety) be called the Truth of all truths?"<sup>2</sup> Extremes meet; and here is a case in point. It is literally true, although of the nature of a paradox—and all highest truths are of this nature—that 'in spiritual things the greatness of the price we pay has much to do with the value of the good we acquire.' The 'Everlasting Nay' of a spiritual quest must needs be pressed to its furthest limit in order that the 'Everlasting Yea' of a blessed life, symbolised by the mystic syllable *Aum* (ओम्) can be attained—a glorious consummation and consequent quietus of all restless thinking and striving (जिज्ञासा निवर्तते). It does not, however, overtake the soul abruptly as an alien something, but we have a foretaste of that consummate bliss in deep, dreamless sleep. It is the fourth, the *Turiya* (तुरीयम्) condition of the self, 'not an exclusive self, but the common ground of all,' comprehending and transcending all the three grades of reality—those of waking, dream and dreamless sleep indicated by the three constituent syllables 'A (अ)—U(उ)—M(म)

1 नेति नेति प्रपञ्चप्रतिषेधरुपादिश्रुतादित्यत् परमादिश्रुतं न ब्रह्मणोऽस्तीति—Com. on V.S. III. 2. xxii.

2 अभावावसाने तु प्रतिषेधे किं सत्यस्य सत्यमित्युच्येत—loc. cit.

of 'AUM' (ओम्).<sup>1</sup> In the inspired language of the Māṇḍūkya Upanishad,<sup>2</sup> this the fourth (तुरीयम्) is not that which is conscious of the subjective (नान्तः प्रज्ञा), nor that which is conscious of the objective (न बहिःप्रज्ञा), nor that which is conscious of both, nor that which is simple consciousness (प्रज्ञानघनं), nor that which is an all-sentient mass, nor that which is all darkness. It is unseen, transcendent, inapprehensible, uninferable, unthinkable, indescribable, the sole essence of the consciousness of self (एकात्मप्रत्ययसारं), the negation of the world (प्रपञ्चोपशमं), the ever-peaceful (शान्तं), all-blissful (सिद्धं), the one unitary principle (अद्वैतं) regarded as the fourth—this indeed is the *Ātman*." Critics of Śaṅkara-Vedānta will at once pounce upon a statement like this and exclaim: "here lies exactly the danger-zone of the *via negativa*; herein is to be found a capital illustration of a vicious abstractionism which has, with perfect logical consistency, represented Brahman, the supposed spiritual principle of unity, as an abstract colourless unity sublimated beyond the zero-point of existence, and consequently as a 'bundle of negations,' a veritable 'lion's den' that wipes out all trace of particularity."

Indeed, Śaṅkara's Brahman as a 'spiritual principle of unity' in the Hegelian sense has been the *bête noire* of critics who have, on the basis of supposed similarity with the Hegelian Absolute, preferred the same charges of 'intellectualism' or 'abstractionism' against Śaṅkara-Vedānta. Even Bradley, to whom the fallen Hegel might well have said '*et tu Brute*' had dealt the death-blow in his famous fling of 'the unearthly ballet of bloodless categories'—the unkindest cut of all, as posterity would also repeat. It will be rather out of place to justify or refute the charges here levelled against Śaṅkara's Brahman; for that will take us into the very heart of his metaphysics. Suffice it to say that such cheap criticisms, couched in worn-out shibboleths, betray a constitutional intellec-

1 तुरीयाधिगमे प्रमाणात् न वा न सत्यम्... चावस्थस्यैव आत्मनस्तुरीयत्वेन प्रति-  
पिपद्विशिष्टत्वात्—Com. on Māṇḍūkya Up., Prakaraṇam I.

2 Ibid.



tual indolence in their authors and, as such, they are not to be taken seriously. It is to be noted that so long as we are in the domain of philosophy and are inspired by Truth as our end,—the context in which alone Śaṅkara's characterisation of Brahman appears,—Truth must necessarily be abstract. Well might Bradley speak for Śaṅkara on this point: "philosophy aims at intellectual satisfaction, in other words, at ultimate truth. It seeks to gain possession of Reality, but only in an ideal form. And hence it is the realization of but one side of our being."<sup>1</sup> Philosophy being essentially an affair of the categories, it is not merely the Hegelian, but all philosophy must, to a certain extent, exhibit 'an unearthly ballet of bloodless categories,' for categories must needs be bloodless. They are, by their very definition, pure universals; they attain flesh-and-blood existence when they are embodied in individuals. Starting from the varied particulars of experience, sentient or otherwise, and following the way of ascent (आरोहः) or abstraction, Śaṅkara demonstrates the inclusion of the different grades of universality in one *summum genus*.<sup>2</sup> But this highest universal is not to be compared to a 'lion's den' that swallows up all particulars, without the possibility of their ever emerging out of it; for, as Śaṅkara has clearly shown, the fundamental cause of all appears up to the last term of the series in the form of this or that effect like an actor, and thus becomes the basis of all current notions and usages.<sup>3</sup>

Now, what Descartes, in his enunciation of *de omnibus dubitandum*, forgot to reckon is that it is not doubt that creates the self-certitude of the thinking ego, and therewith the criterion of truth, but it is the prior certainty of the principle of consciousness, which is the very base-rock of certitude, that creates the doubt. That is clearly the implication of the

1 *Essays on Truth and Reality*, pp. 11-2.

2 चनेके हि विलक्षणाः चेतनाचेतनरूपाः सामान्यविशेषाः तेषां पारम्यर्थ्यगत्वा एकस्मिन् महासामान्ये चन्तर्भावः.—Com. on Brihad. Up.

3 तथा मूलकारणमेव वा अन्यात् कार्यात् तेन तेन कार्याकारिण नटवन् व्यवहारा-  
सदृशं प्रतिपद्यते.—Com. on V.S. II. 1. xviii.

dictum—सर्वस्यात्मत्वाच्चब्रह्मासितप्रसिद्धिः. If that be really the case, is there any room for doubt (संशयः) and the consequent need of philosophical enquiry (जिज्ञासा)? To this Śaṅkara readily replies that although no one doubts *that* there is an Absolute (ब्रह्म) as the Self of all (सर्वस्यात्मत्वात्), yet there are conflicting opinions as to *what* that Absolute is ; and, accordingly, these discrepancies and conflicts of opinion are sure to give rise to doubt.<sup>1</sup> Doubt is not, as is ordinarily believed, the mere absence or negative of belief. Just as there cannot be anything as bare negation, so there cannot be any such thing as mere doubt, meaning thereby a purely negative attitude. Doubt is the belief that some assertion is not certainly true ; this belief, for aught we know, may itself turn out to be false. Hence the determination of the validity or legitimacy of any doubt presupposes a criterion of certainty and a power of discrimination in the believing agent. In the face of current conflicting beliefs, Śaṅkara exhorts the philosophic inquirer to assume a critical attitude, in order to sift the grounds of a belief before espousing it, and not merely to rest in an animal faith originating from non-discrimination and revealing itself in perceptual activities etc.<sup>2</sup> Thus it is doubt or scepticism, as against animal faith, which is the distinctive prerogative of man as a rational animal ; and it is to be invoked as being the very gateway to that rational conviction or criticised faith which alone promises salvation to those that hanker after it, with transparent sincerity and philosophical sobriety. Well might Śaṅkara say in the words of Browning<sup>3</sup>:

“Rather I prize the doubt

Low kinds exist without”

as also of Tennyson who assured us that

“There lives more faith in honest doubt

Believe me, than half so in the creeds.”<sup>4</sup>

1 यदि लोके ब्रह्मात्मत्वेन प्रसिद्धमस्ति ततो ज्ञातमेवेत्यजिज्ञास्यत्वं पुनरापद्मम् । न तद्विशेषं प्रति विप्रतिपत्तेः—Com. on V.S. I. 1. i.

2 पञ्चादौनाश प्रसिद्ध एवाविवेकपूर्वकः प्रत्यक्षादिव्यवहारः.—Introduction to V.S.

• 3 Rabbi Ben Ezra.

4 In Memoriam.

The mere having of a stock of experience—in its three-fold aspect of feeling (भोग्यत्वं), volition (कर्तृत्वं) and cognition (प्रमादत्वं)—is not what differentiates man from the lower animals that possess as much, perhaps a wider range of experience than men do. So much is clearly implied in the statement viz: “it is well known that in all animals spring (instinctively) from their very nature the desire to experience pleasure and shun pain as conditioned by the will to pleasure and avoidance of pain.”<sup>1</sup> The life of pleasure seeking or avoidance of pain, is instinctive and unreflecting, and does not vindicate the boasted superiority of man as a rational creature. Śaṅkara demonstrates the kinship of the human with the sub-human world from the cognitive side as well. From the sameness of volitional reaction on the part of men and the lower animals in the presence of same presentations, Śaṅkara rightly draws the conclusion that men and the lower animals follow the same procedure with reference to the means and objects of knowledge. Now it is well known that the perception of animals and their movements, based thereon, are engendered in the absence of discrimination (between the self and the not-self); it is, therefore, concluded by parity of reasoning that the perceptions and the consequent actions of rational beings are also on the same footing with those of lower animals (so long as there is the same want of discrimination in them).<sup>2</sup> Śaṅkara has rightly assigned the cognitive and volitional reaction on experience to the biological level and included it in animal psychology, which is frankly behavioristic. It is only by transcending this uncritical stage—the instinctive, biological or merely animal level of experience—that man can vindicate his higher certificate of birth. As did Socrates also preach his central message: ‘a life without criti-

1 इह खलुः सर्वजन्तोः सुखं मे भूयात् दुःखं मा भूदिति स्वरसतः सुखोत्पादित्वा दुःखनिहासे भवतः.—*Hastāmālakam*.

2 अतः समानः पञ्चादिभिः पुरुषाणां प्रमाणप्रमेयव्यवहारः । पञ्चादीनाञ्च प्रसिद्ध एवाविवेकपूर्वकः प्रत्यक्षादिव्यवहारः । तत्सामान्यदर्शनादव्युत्पत्तमतमपि पुरुषाणां प्रत्यक्षादिव्यवहारस्तत्कालः समान इति निश्चीयते.—Introduction to V.S.

cism or reflexion upon the meaning of life, is unworthy of man.<sup>1</sup>

'So far the philosophical importance of 'doubt' (सन्देहः), as one of the constitutive factors of the attitude of questioning (जिज्ञासा), has been dealt with. Now as to the other factor viz. *prayojanam* (प्रयोजनम्) or 'value.' *Prayojanam* has been defined as 'that which being known is sought after, in order to be converted into a mode of one's being.'<sup>2</sup> It may, with a fair degree of accuracy, be rendered by the term 'Good'; for whatever we seek, we seek under the form of the Good (*Quid quid petitur petitur sub specie boni*). It is in this sense that Satan uttered the invocation "Evil, be thou my good." The search after truth would be impossible, unless truth could be represented as a value. Truth therefore, as Plato held, should be subordinated to the Good. Truth as mere cognition, truth as the 'barren rehearsal' of an already finished world has no value for us, and, as such, lacks the motivation to a philosophical inquiry. Accordingly, Bradley in our own day gives the verdict that 'a true philosophy cannot justify its apotheosis' in as much as 'knowledge, taken apart from being, has no goodness or reality at all, and, further, a mere knowledge of being cannot satisfy by itself.'<sup>3</sup> Śaṅkara rises equal to the occasion, and makes the significant assertion that the knowledge of Brahman (which the *jijñāsā* has in view) is itself the Good, so far as it extirpates all evil, such as *avidyā* or nescience, which is the seed of all mundane existence.<sup>4</sup> That Brahman itself is the supreme object of our quest (इष्टतमं) and the conditioning ground of all philosophic inquiry presupposes the presence of this factor of goodness in Brahman. It is the essential attribute (स्वरूपलक्षणं) of *Ānanda* (आनन्दः), which is, properly speaking, equated to Brahman as *Saccidānandam*

<sup>1</sup> *Apologu*.

<sup>2</sup> यदवगतं सत् स्ववृत्तितया इष्यते तत् प्रयोजनम्—*Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, Chap. VIII.

<sup>3</sup> *Essays on Truth and Reality*, pp. 13, 8.

<sup>4</sup> ब्रह्मावगतिर्हि पुरुषार्थः । निःशेषसंसारबीजाविद्याद्यनर्थनिवहंश्चात्—*Com.* on V.S. I. 1, i.

(सुखिदानन्द'), that answers this need. Being as Being has a fictitious glamour of sanctity about it. It is this fascination of pure Being that has led astray metaphysicians from Parmenides downwards. The characterisation of Reality as mere Being stands self-condemned, so far as it fails to excite our interest in it and stimulate an intellectual curiosity. The mere 'that' of existence does not satisfy us ; we ask invariably : 'what' is 'that' ?—and this 'what' that supplements the mere 'that' meets the strictly philosophic demand. Hence, there is the mention of *Ānanda* (आनन्दः), in order to indicate the presence of a value or a 'good' in Brahman as something ultimate (प्रथोजनसूचनार्थ-मानन्दवद्भवम्).<sup>1</sup> Nor is the term *cit* (चित्) (as occurring in the definition of Brahman as *Saccidānandam*) devoid of meaning ; for what it signifies is that it is *ānanda* (आनन्दः), known as such, that alone can figure as a human end or good (न चेवं चित्पदं व्यर्थम्, ... ज्ञायमानानन्दस्यैव पुरुषार्थत्वात्). Or, as the *Bhāmati* carries this thought a step further, *Ānanda* and its expression are one and the same.<sup>2</sup> (आनन्दप्रकाशयोरमेदात्). All values, in this sense, are conscious values.

Now, if truth has a value, and value is to be measured, as some contend, by satisfaction it affords, we are sure to be deflected from the path of truth-seeking. 'What we mean by *value* in the world' says Lotze, 'lies wholly in the *feeling* of *satisfaction* or of *pleasure* which we experience from it.'<sup>3</sup> Lotze then proceeds to escape from the covert subjectivism or egoistic hedonism of such a conception of value by the somewhat baffling addition that 'desire, for one's own pleasure should not be one's motive.'<sup>4</sup> But his philosophy stands to the last unredeemed of this inherent subjectivism. In point of fact satisfaction connotes something more than what is conveyed by pleasure and pain as passive states of the soul. Satisfaction is strictly inseparable from conation or effort, and it ensues upon the attainment of some 'good' (इष्टप्राप्तिः). Values, therefore, represent our

1 From *Sikhāmaṇi*, a commentary on Vedānta paribhāṣhā, Chap. I.

2 On Śaṅkara's Com. on V.S. I. i. i.

3 *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion*, (tr. by Conybeare), p. 123.

4 *Ibid*, p. 126.

sustained purposes or ends (प्रवर्थाः), and imply the satisfaction, not of every passing or chance desire, but of the abiding and deep-seated ones. Truly speaking, the essence of values does not lie in satisfaction, although the inseparable connection of the two gives rise to this presumption. In the technical language of logic, satisfaction may be called the *proprium* of value. Value, according to Bosanquet, lies deeper and is not conferred by *de facto* satisfying a contain, but is in 'satisfactoriness' rather than 'satisfaction'—in the character of completeness and positive non-contradiction which gives the power to satisfy conations because it belongs to what unites all reality in itself. This is, indeed, a thorny point in the present-day discussions on the nature of values. It is rather hazardous to predict the net result of such discussions ; but this much is certain that these will not follow the lead of the purely subjective or psychological rendering of values, given by the writers of the Austrian school, Meinong and Ehrenfels, who end by making the values matters of satisfaction or pleasurable feeling. Accordingly, idealistic writers, like Bosanquet, combat this psychologizing of values, and substitute 'satisfactoriness' for 'satisfaction' as being the only satisfactory method of ensuring the objectivity, and for the matter of that, a philosophy of values. But the remedy of crass subjectivism or psychologism in the treatment of values, which Bosanquet has provided in this prescript of his, turns out to be as bad as the disease itself. His is only an escape from the devil of subjectivism unto the deep sea of abstractionism. It is his absolutistic logic which has been justly viewed with suspicion,—as being largely responsible for the discredit into which his treatment of values has fallen. His distinction of 'satisfaction' from 'satisfactoriness', along with a concentration on the latter, is evidently modelled on the logical detachment of the content and structure of truth from the concrete whole of experience. But the abstraction which is permissible, and is indeed indispensable in logic or any of the special sciences becomes meaningless in the wider context of philosophy. Values, where persons are not—can there be, as rightly argued by a recent critic, a greater contradiction?

Is not a depersonalised value,—and that is exactly what ‘satisfactoriness’ amounts to—, a *Werth an sich* or ‘value-in-itself’ as much of a *caput mortuum* as the *Ding an sich* or ‘thing-in-itself’? But in all fairness to Bosanquet it must be admitted that he seems to be on the true line of advance so far as he treats the idea of purpose as a finite category—as ‘a psychological, temporal and ethical idea’<sup>1</sup>—and disqualifies it in its application to the whole or the Absolute. Like Bosanquet, Śaṅkara too argues from the ‘teleology of finite consciousness’ with its inevitable shortcomings to the inadmissibility of purpose or *prayojanam* (प्रयोजन) in a narrower sense, as a principle of cosmic interpretation. It is well known how Śaṅkara strenuously fights against the ascription of ‘purpose’ to Brahman in the sense of ‘desire for something as yet unattained’, in so far as it has the patent label of finitude upon it, and also conflicts with the scriptural description of Brahman as of ‘realised purpose’ (आप्तकामं). The same ban is extended, as a matter of course, to the feeling of ‘satisfaction’ which is but the correlate of purpose. Nor can the mere desire to know (जिज्ञासा) have, as such, any value whatsoever, far less serve as the criterion of truth in Śaṅkara’s opinion. He is definitely of the opinion that the desire in question is the *tolum*, the whole process from its subjective inception right up to the attainment of the desired object. As it has been aptly remarked, the verb ‘desiring’, unlike other transitive verbs, wherein the object and the result are separable, does not admit a like separation of ‘the object of desire’ from ‘the result of desire’; for example, so far as the transitive verb of ‘reaching’ in the proposition ‘I am reaching’ home’ (गृहं गच्छामि) is concerned, ‘the house’ is the ‘object’ of ‘reaching’ and the arrival at home its ‘result.’ When, I say, however, that ‘I desire to know Brahman,’ Brahman is the *object* of desire, and the knowledge of Brahman is the *result* of such desire. The knowledge (ज्ञानम्), here spoken of, may stand either for the process, or the product, or both. Now, ‘the ‘desire’ can as little be separated from ‘Brahman’, as ‘Brahman’

<sup>1</sup> Bosanquet, *Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 217.

from 'the knowledge of Brahman' ('Desire'—'Knowledge of Brahman'—'Brahman'). All are thus parts of one integral whole. It is this *totum simul*, this knowledge of Brahman, that is, according to Śaṅkara, the unit of value (ब्रह्मावगतिर्हि पुरुषार्थः) and, as such, it is necessarily impersonal, involving no reference, to the actual attainment of this knowledge by some particular individual. This does not, however, obliterate all reference to human desire or attainment; for it is in the very possibility of its being desired or achieved—what Bosanquet would call its 'satisfactoriness' and Śaṅkara would denominate its 'desirability' (इच्छत्वं), —that the essence of value consists. But satisfaction which results, as the psychology of volition would have it, as a matter of course, on the attainment of the object of desire, is only an index of successful conation. It does in no way affect the integral character of value, which is a closed system by itself. A symbolic representation will serve to make the position clearer still. Let 'A' stand for the 'subject desiring,' 'B' for 'knowledge of Brahman', that is, 'the object of desire', and 'R' for the relation of 'desiring', then A (R) B will represent the unit of value (पुरुषार्थः). When, however, this value or good becomes the object of desire to one particular individual (पुरुषः) say 'A', satisfaction results on the attainment of the object of desire, which is no other than the 'knowledge of Brahman' and can be represented thus, 'S' standing for 'satisfaction':  $A'(R)\{A(R)B\} + S$ . S thus in no way affects  $\{A(R)B\}$  in the formula.

What is important for us to note in this discussion is the distinct emphasis which Śaṅkara puts on the object of desire or value rather than on valuation or sense of value. It is clearly evidenced by the fine psychological analysis of *jijñāsā* (जिज्ञासा), and of 'desire' that he has furnished. He never allows himself to forget that it is not the valuing that is valued, but the object to which value is attached. The mere desire to know, or the feeling of satisfaction attendant on its realisation is only a sense of value, and not a *de facto* value. We may, however, value the sense of value, just as we may love love. This is the standing vice of all subjectivism, vague emotionalism, or of



pragmatism. There is, in a strictly philosophical reference, no value in the so-called 'desire' for 'something evermore about to be,' until and unless such a desire can be shown to be bound for some definite moorings. Śaṅkara takes exception to the pragmatic creed just on this score. The pragmatists lay exclusive emphasis on the mere fact of desiring or seeking in studied ignorance of the object desired or sought after, and thus preach the gospel of practice for the sake of practice or mere doing, without reference to, and independence of, the quality of what is done or the good that is to be achieved thereby. Practice or activity which has an unmistakable reference to something that is yet to be (भव्यं) and to the good that is the result of doing (क्रिया), and, as such, is capable of being more or less, fails to provide for the bliss that is ultimate (निःशेषम्). Śaṅkara perpetually harps on this very theme—and that is just the bone of contention between him and the Mīmāṃsakas—that practice or activity (क्रिया) does not depend upon the object (वस्तुस्वरूपनिरपेक्षा), but is dependent on the free choice of the individual (पुरुषचित्तव्यापाराधीना). Hence, so far as practice is concerned, there is possibility of variation in response. But *jñāna* (ज्ञानम्) or knowledge has always an objective basis only (वैबल्यवस्तुतन्त्रम्), which constitutes its truth. Śaṅkara is so far an epistemological realist out-and-out, and a confirmed anti-pragmatist.

The uncompromising character of his anti-pragmatism is brought into prominence in course of the rather long-drawn controversy with the two main sections of the Mīmāṃsaka school. One of these, the school of Kumārila Bhatta, in strict fidelity to the radical pragmatism of Jaiminī, the founder of the Mīmāṃsaka school, held that all Vedic texts referring to Brahman, not bearing a practical import, are useless and therefore unauthoritative in as much as the Vedas are known to have only a practical import.<sup>1</sup> The other school, headed by Prabhākara, represents a Voluntaristic pragmatism which recoils from this extreme form of pragmatism and justifies the authority of scriptural texts as injunctions for the act of knowing (प्रतिपत्तिविधिः),

1 आचार्यस्य क्रियार्थत्वादानर्थक्यमतदर्शनाम्—Com. on V.S. I. 1. iv.

knowledge (ज्ञान) being regarded as a form of activity (क्रिया), Śaṅkara would not put up even with this moderate form of pragmatism as embodied in the *Pratipatti Vidhi* (प्रतिपत्तिविधि:), which seems to be have been fashioned after the later Mīmāṃsā injunction of Brahman as being needed for worship only (उपासनाविधि:). Now, Indian pragmatism which was ousted by Śaṅkara could not, however, be deceived by its apparent similarity to his own philosophical theory ; indeed, *pratipatti-vidhi* (प्रतिपत्तिविधि:) seems to be a half-way house, a mixed mode or a blend of intellectualism and voluntarism. The *Prābhākara* derives the plausibility of his theory from the activity of thinking (चिन्तनम्), which is proximate to, and in a sense an indispensable prelude to, knowledge (ज्ञानम्). This thinking, which is, doubtless, mental, and, as such, dependent on a subject, infects knowledge also with this subjective, active character and thus converts it into a mental activity (मानसी क्रिया). Śaṅkara was at great pains to refute in anticipation the imputation of a subjectivism we come across in the *Prābhākara* school. There is, confessedly, in all knowledge, a determination by the object, on the one hand, and freedom or self-determination of the subject on the other. Knowledge thus points in two contrary directions ; the determination of the object in the one and freedom or indetermination on the other. Śaṅkara unhesitatingly accepts the first alternative, while the pragmatist escapes from the 'block-universe' of the Realist and Absolutist by way of the second. Ultimately the quarrel of Śaṅkara with Prabhākara resolves itself into a question of emphasis merely ; Śaṅkara lays exclusive emphasis on *pratipatti* (प्रतिपत्ति:) or *avagati* (अवगति:), while the other on *Vidhi* (विधि:).

The pragmatists might, for aught we know, try to make capital out of Śaṅkara's mention of 'desire' (इच्छा) in connection with *jijñāsā* (जिज्ञासा) and exploit it in a pragmatic interest. But the 'desire' in question is neither inarticulate feeling, nor a blind impulse, but a ratiocinative desire, which can hardly be dissociated from its object with which it is indissolubly bound up. By his incisive emphasis on the 'object' (वस्तु), he steers clear of the excesses of vague emotionalism, morbid sentimentalism and

crass pragmatism lodged in the 'will to believe'; and avoids, in particular, the aberrations of a purely psychological theory of values. In point of fact, Śaṅkara was temperamentally incapable of desiring or pursuing a good that is purely subjective. Every object of desire has for him a bifocal existence: it is a subject-object, to coin an expression suited to the exigencies of the situation. His re-iterated emphasis on *caitanya* (चैतन्यम्) leaves no room for doubt as to his idealistic persuasion in philosophy. But his absolute idealism is not at all at variance with absolute realism (वस्तुतन्त्रता). It is, strictly speaking, a blend of idealism and realism—a system of ideal-realism proper. Now, the logic of pragmatism as presupposed in its way of dealing with 'the desire to know' (जिज्ञासा) is at best sophistical. Making 'want' or 'need' (प्रयोजन) the settled point of departure in the contest, it might however be shown that there can be no knowledge and no truth, for the matter of that, except in so far as an 'interest' or 'need' is operative in this regard, and just because this interest or need is practical, it follows that everything in the end is practical (pragmatism), or that no interest in the end can be purely theoretical (anti-intellectualism). But it requires no extra ingenuity to realise that if the free use of the intellect (which alone is the precondition of knowledge) be one aspect of our nature we must needs have a desire for that use. There is evidently a tendency here to pass surreptitiously from 'my need' which, as directed towards the attainment of a result, is as yet unrealised or practical (अव्यं) (an incontestable proposition) to the fallacious conclusion that 'the object (विषयः) of my need is itself practical' (क्रियाधर्कः) (a false proposition). It is, as Śaṅkara would argue, a case of pure *non sequitur*, since my need or interest, although practical in its inceptive stage, may nevertheless have for its object something that in itself is not practical, far less practice itself. One might as well argue that I cannot desire to act for the sake of another because such an other-regarding desire is a part of myself. Śaṅkara's pronouncement on the point is well worth quoting here: "men do act for the fulfilment of the interest of other, although inspired by

self-interest.”<sup>1</sup> One need not stop here to enquire whether it is suspiciously similar to the hedonistic interpretation of ‘duty’ as ‘enlightened self-interest’ only. What is of crucial importance is the meaning and status of ‘self’ in the phrase ‘self-interest’ on which such vital issues are staked from the standpoint of Advaita-Vedānta. But we cannot enter into a discussion on this topic without anticipating future course of our reflections.

Accordingly, Śaṅkara would emphatically repudiate the contention that all needs in the end are of a practical nature, and that, therefore, truth is also made—as claimed alike by James’s ‘pragmatism’, Dewey’s ‘instrumentalism’ and Schiller’s ‘humanism’. He repeatedly declares<sup>2</sup> with a Bradleyan emphasis that ‘truth does not depend upon me’<sup>3</sup> (न वस्तुयाद्यान्यज्ञानं पुरुषबुद्धापेक्षम्), that truth is dependent upon a thing that is eternally accomplished (नित्यनिवृत्तं); and not contingent upon any activity whatsoever. “Every truth” says Bradley after the manner of Śaṅkara, “is eternal, even, for instance, such a truth as ‘I now have a toothache’. Truth qualifies that which is beyond mere succession, and it takes whatever it contains beyond the flux of mere event.”<sup>4</sup> As the concluding reflection on the theme, one might take the following statement of Śaṅkara’s: ‘meditation and reflection, although mental depending, as they do, on the person (meditating or reflecting) may either be made or not made or modified. Truth, on the other hand, is the result of the application of the different courses of valid knowledge, and these, again, have for their objects things as they are in themselves. Hence truth is incapable of being either made or not made or modified.’<sup>5</sup> This leads us to the very heart of the problem of Truth and Knowledge.

1 सार्थप्रयुक्त एव च सर्वोऽननः परार्थेऽपि प्रवर्तते—Com. on V.S. II. 2. xxxvii

2 Com. on V.S. I. 1. ii.

3 Cf. *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 341.

4 *Ibid*, p. 340.

5 ध्यानं चिन्तनं यद्यपि मानसं तथापि पुरुषेण कर्तुमकर्तुमग्न्यथा वा कर्तुं शक्यं पुरुषतत्त्वात् । ज्ञानं प्रमाद्यज्ज्ञानम् । प्रमाद्यन्तु यथाभूतवस्तुविषयम् । अतो ज्ञानं कर्तुमकर्तुमग्न्यथा वा कर्तुं न शक्यम्—Com. on V.S. I. 1. iv.

Knowledge is knowing with certitude, and Epistemology or Theory of Knowledge is, therefore, primarily a theory of certitude. Almost all systems of Indian philosophy—to which the Śaṅkara-Vedānta forms no exception—begin with an elaborate enquiry into the nature of *pramāṇas* (प्रमाणानि) or self-evidencing sources of knowledge, *pramā* (प्रमा) or valid knowledge i.e. truth (as the result of the employment of *pramāṇas*) and *prameya* (प्रमेयम्) or object of valid knowledge, that is, Reality. This fact, at least, is sufficient to absolve Indian philosophy, Śaṅkara's philosophy in particular, from the charges of 'dogmatism' and the like. But European philosophy, as its history shows, universally began with metaphysics; and epistemology, or the nearest approximation to it, was a much later product. This unmistakable emphasis on the subjective side, is the individuality, the peculiar trait or excellence of Indian philosophy, and the much-maligned 'brooding East' has in this respect a redeeming grace.

Now the problem of criteriology is to ascertain the validity of mental assents. To that end we have got to make a distinction between evidence and certitude, which very nearly corresponds to that between *pramāṇa* (प्रमाण) and *pramā* (प्रमा). 'Evidence', as the etymology of the word shows, is simply 'bringing to light', or manifestation of objective truth; certitude is the result of reflection. Evidence, in other words, is a quality of objects known, certitude a state of the subject knowing. The essential conditions of the criterion of truth may be summed up as follows: in the first place, it must be *intrinsic*. It is mainly negative in significance and application—meant to exclude the criterion of Traditionalists or Dogmatists. In its insistence on *anubhava* (अनुभवः) or experience in its integrity as the *terminus ad quem* of all *Śruti-prāmāṇyam* (श्रुतिप्रामाण्यम्) or scriptural authority, the Advaita-Vedānta has forced into prominence the essence of intrinsic evidence. Secondly, it must be *objective*. It is meant to combat the criterion of the pragmatists and subjectivists in general. Descartes' criterion of 'clearness and distinctness of perceptions' or Spencer's test of 'the inconceivability

of the opposite' come under this ban. Clearness or distinctness of perceptions or its opposite does in no way add to or detract from the determinate nature of truth which is independent of all such variations in apprehension. Spencer also errs in basing the truth of an idea on subjective inconceivability. An idea is true not because its contradictory is inconceivable, but its contradictory is inconceivable because it is true. It is interesting to note that Śaṅkara has, in his searching analysis of the Mīmāṃsaka criterion of truth, expressed his own view in no uncertain terms. Truth or 'the knowledge of the real nature of things does not depend on subjective apprehension.....the true knowledge of all the things (or accomplished facts) depends on the things themselves.'<sup>1</sup> The third or the last condition attaching to the criterion of truth is that it should be *immediate*. This condition only reinforces the first, emphasising only the underivative and self-validating character of the criterion. It has come in for a whole-hearted recognition in the logic of the Vedānta which affirms, in connection with the problem of *prāmāṇyam*, that the 'criterion of truth is dependent on the general conditions of knowledge and does not presuppose any extra quality or condition, for truth (of whatever kind it may be) does not reveal the presence of any such invariable condition'.<sup>2</sup> This directly points to the moot-question whether the criterion of truth (प्रामाण्यं) is immediate (स्वतः) or mediate (परतः). The *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* begins by splitting up the question into two subdivisions: *svatastvam* (स्वतस्त्वं) or immediacy or *paratastvam* (परतस्त्वं), first, as regards its generation (उत्पत्तिः) and secondly, as regards its apprehension (ज्ञप्तिः). It is decisively of opinion that the evidentiary value of all the six recognised sources of knowledge is generated as well as known immediately. Thus, the criterion of truth is defined as the form of knowledge which,

1 न वस्तुयाथात्म्यज्ञानं पुरुषबुद्धापेक्षम् । ...भूतवस्तुविषयाणां प्रामाण्यं वस्तुतन्त्रम्—  
Com. on V.S. I. 1. ii.

•2 तत्र (प्रामाण्यं) ज्ञानसामानासामयीप्रयोज्यं न तु अधिकं गुणमपेक्षते, प्रमाणाच्चे  
अनुगतगुणाभावात्—*Vedānta-paribhāṣā*, Chap. VI.

as comprehending both apprehension and memory, prompts an activity that ends in fruition or harmony, and has the same form as the object (of knowledge) has. It is also known immediately. 'To be known immediately means knowledge in virtue of those (minimum) conditions which reveal its own substratum, these being all the while the absence of any defect (such as doubt etc.).'<sup>1</sup> The Vedāntic criterion of truth, thus delineated, has all the three aforesaid conditions viz. intrinsicness, immediacy and objectivity (तद्वति तत्प्रकारकज्ञानत्वम्)—which is evidently realistic in significance—and has another in addition viz. 'harmony with experience' which, however, is pragmatic in conception. The pragmatic or realistic test of truth embodies only a half-truth, and a half-truth is necessarily distorted into untruth when taken as the whole truth. The Śāṅkara-Vedānta criterion of truth has the merit of incorporating into itself the complementary half-truths enshrined by each, and thus goes beyond both pragmatism and realism as philosophical radicals.

Thus, following the approach through Epistemology we are led to the threshold of Vedāntic metaphysics, and to a tentative formulation of the final object or end of our quest. "Philosophy, we saw" as says Bradley, "was a search for that which in the end is true. And we observed that so far as a man stands outside of this pursuit, it cannot in the end justify its existence against him. He may decline to some extent at least, to enter into the pursuit.....but if he enters on it and so far as he enters on it, he commits himself inevitably to a tacit assumption."<sup>1</sup> Now, the 'assumption' in question, so far as Śāṅkara is concerned, is 'the general assumption or current notion regarding Brahman as being of the nature of self' (आत्मत्वात् ब्रह्मास्तित्वप्रसिद्धिः); and this specific object of our quest

1 एवमुक्तानां प्रमाणाणां प्रामाण्यं स्वत एव उत्पद्यते, ज्ञायते च । तथाहि श्रुत्यनुभव-साधारणं संवादिप्रवृत्त्यनुकूलं तद्वतितत्प्रकारकज्ञानत्वं प्रामाण्यम् । ज्ञायते च प्रामाण्यं स्वतः । स्वतो यावत्तत्त्व दोषाभावे सति यावत्स्वाश्रयगोचकसामग्रीयावत्त्वम्—*Vedānta-paribhāṣā*, Chap. VI.

. 2 *Essays on Truth and Reality*, pp. 15-6.

(तद्विशेषं प्रति) about which there are so many contradictory opinions (विप्रतिपत्तेः), gives the impulse to philosophical inquiry, so that the vague, incipient knowledge of the supreme object of our enquiry may be consummated in an integral experience (अनुभवः), a felt totality, a higher immediacy or 'knowing and being in one', which is 'the ultimate goal of our knowledge and of every endeavour.'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p. 231.



## LECTURE V.

### ANALYSIS OF EXPERIENCE.

If knowledge presupposes 'desire' and consequently the 'search' for it, the search itself presupposes, in a certain sense, the knowledge, however vague, of that object of desire or search. No one would evidently care to search or strive for a possession unless he was sure that he could ascertain when the possession in question was or was not secured. All search, therefore, is possible on the assumption of the prior existence of the object of search, which is in no way staked, or contingent upon my activity of search ; and search for knowledge forms no exception to this general law. Accordingly Śaṅkara observes that it is impossible to establish by any piece of reasoning the introduction of such a Brahman or the knowledge thereof into action. Nor, again, is there the introduction of Brahman into action as an object of the activity of knowing.<sup>1</sup> All seeking, thus, is in a sense a finding and an implicit possession of the thing sought for ; and 'the readiness to seek is already something of an attainment even if a poor one.'<sup>2</sup> In the cryptic language of the scriptures, the *λόγος* or 'the Word' which 'was in the beginning and was with God' and even 'was God,' Himself, is 'made flesh.' Now the point of epistemological importance revealed by the desire to know is that there is no absolute beginning of truth ; the pursuit of truth is only a case of progressive initiation. The pursuit of truth to which philosophy stands pledged, is not progress *from* sheer error or ignorance *to* complete knowledge or truth, but it is knowledge *in* progress. In reference to the general acknowledgment that Brahman is to be enquired into ( ब्रह्म

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1 एवंभूतस्य च ब्रह्मण्यसंज्ञानस्य वा न कयाचिद् युक्त्या ब्रह्मः कार्यानुपप्रेक्ष्य कल्पयितुम् । न च विदित्क्रियाकार्यत्वेन कार्यानुपप्रेक्षी ब्रह्मणः—Com. on V.S.I. 1. iv.

<sup>2</sup> Royce, *The World and the Individual*, Vol. I., p. 181.

जिज्ञासितव्यम्), Śaṅkara impresses this truth on our minds by way of a significant query: 'Is the Brahman (thus described) known or not known (prior to the philosophic inquiry proposed to be undertaken)? If it is known, it need not be enquired into; if not known, it cannot be enquired into.<sup>1</sup> Reference might also be made to the familiar couplet fashioned in the same key: 'the supreme principle being known, the study of Brahman is useless; the supreme principle being unknown, the study of Brahman is equally useless.'<sup>2</sup> What we may conveniently note here, in passing, is that the dilemmatic dialectic employed by Śaṅkara is unmistakably reminiscent of its precursor in the *Mādhyaṃika* school, specially of *Nāgārjuna*, the celebrated Buddhist dialectician of the first century A. D. The Śaṅkara-Vedānta dialectic was later revived and consolidated by Śreeharsha (about 1190 A. D.) in his famous polemical treatise, *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhāḍyam* (खण्डनखण्डखाद्यम्), which had made the dialectical part (तर्कपादः) of Śaṅkara's commentary its settled point of departure. Now, we have an analogue of this dialectical form of argument in the *Meno*. The Socratic profession of ignorance of the nature of virtue is readily met by Meno with the objection: "How will you enquire into that which you do not already know? What will you put forth as the subject of the enquiry? And if you find what you want, how will you recognise that this is the thing which you did not know?" "I see what you mean" answers Socrates, "but consider what a troublesome discussion you are raising. You argue that a man cannot enquire either into that which he knows or into that which he does not know; for if he knows, he has no need to enquire, and, if not, he cannot enquire, for he does not know the very subject about which he has to enquire."<sup>3</sup> The analogy between Śaṅkara's and Plato's formulation of the problem of knowledge is so striking that one seems to be the

1 तत् पुनर्ब्रह्मप्रसिद्धमप्रसिद्धं वा स्यात् । यदि प्रसिद्धं न जिज्ञासितव्यमथाप्रसिद्धं नैव शक्यं जिज्ञासितुमिति—Com. on V.S.I. I. i.

\* 2 विज्ञाते परतत्त्वे ब्रह्माधीतिसु निष्फला । अविज्ञाते परतत्त्वे ब्रह्माधीतिसु निष्फला ॥

3 *Meno*, 80 D.

exact echo or replica of the other. A difference, however, comes out, it would appear, in the respective working out of this problem. So far as the answer is given by Plato in the form of a myth that "all learning is recollection,"<sup>1</sup> it might be construed as a surrender to unscientific consciousness or poetic fiction—an inevitable sequel to his failure in taking by the horns, as the phrase goes, the persistent dilemma of knowledge. Śaṅkara, on the other hand, can legitimately claim to have escaped between the horns, so far as he holds that enquiry or knowledge is possible for us. For, although there is knowledge in the form of confused notions with regard to the nature of Brahman, as the sole object of knowledge, there is the absence of true knowledge (which can be of one form only) and hence the presumed uselessness of enquiry has reference to those varieties of contradictory opinions and not to right opinion or truth.<sup>2</sup> On a closer comparative study of the answers given by Plato and Śaṅkara respectively, we find that there is thorough agreement between them on the fundamentals. The Platonic doctrine of Reminiscence is not a mere myth or a worthless husk ; even if it be a husk, it conceals a rich kernel of philosophic truth. For in studying Plato we must cultivate that mental alertness which does not accept things at their face-value ; for Plato was first a poet and then a philosopher, and so the form of analogy came readily to him. "The metaphor of 'Reminiscence,' " as Edward Caird rightly interprets it,<sup>3</sup> "is a convenient way of bringing before us the idea that the acquisition of knowledge is not a process of putting something into the mind *ab extra*, but the evolution of something involved in its own nature." Stripped of all metaphors, the doctrine in question means not going back to the beginningless past in search of truth but delving into one's deeper nature and collecting or gathering it up anew by separating it from its

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, 81B.

<sup>2</sup> यदि लोके ब्रह्मात्मत्वेन प्रसिद्धमस्ति ततो ज्ञातमेवेत्यभिप्रायः पुनरापन्नम् । न तद्विशेषं प्रति विप्रतिपत्तेः—Com. on V.S.I. 1. i.

<sup>3</sup> *Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophers*, p. 93.

extraneous associations. The echo of the Socratic γνῶθι σεαυτόν ("know thyself") makes itself heard here. That this was the deeper meaning of the myth of Reminiscence seems to be further countenanced by the fact that the Platonic Socrates was known to have practised the obstetric art upon the souls of those questioned by him, as did his mother Phænerate upon human bodies. The task of the philosopher is simply to help the soul in giving birth to the truth that is struggling for expression. To Śaṅkara as well as to Plato, opinion (प्रसिद्धिः) is not a mere synonym of ignorance but a *tertium quid* midway between knowledge and ignorance. Erroneous opinion, though false, is knowledge all the same: it is inchoate or confused knowledge, *experientia vaga* in the Spinozistic sense; and it is not by negating or excluding opinion but only by incorporating or transmuting it that knowledge justifies its existence as something essentially dynamic in nature. The service that all scriptures and all teachers of philosophy can render in this transition from the implicit to the explicit state of knowledge is, after all, a negative one—of removing the obstacles that stand in the way of this self-revelation of Knowledge. Knowledge shines, according to the Vedānta, by a free grace as it were. Thus beyond all verbal differences, there is a fundamental agreement between Plato and Śaṅkara. All knowledge, according to one, is Recollection; while, according to the other, all knowledge is Revelation. From the trend of foregoing reflections it is evident that immediate experience or common-sense valuation forms, as it needs must do, the inevitable starting-point of knowledge from the standpoint of the Vedānta. This stage of knowledge, with unreflecting acquiescence superinduced thereon, is necessarily characterised by distracting varieties of opinion, the inherent contradictions of which lead one to doubt, and wonder, and finally to ask like the jesting Pilate: 'What is truth'? What was originally uttered in jest is, however, the characteristic mood of philosophic earnest. This occasions the necessity of transcending the stage of immediate unreflecting experience, and entering upon that of thought

proper, which promises a satisfactory answer to the age-long question: "What is truth?"

Now, if thinking is questioning experience, the characteristic form in which such thinking expresses itself is: *what is that?*—that is to say, the form of judgment proper. This judgment as the unit of thought involves a reference beyond the 'that' or datum of immediate experience to a 'what' that it means and stands for, and thus owns as the predicate. The 'that' and the 'what' as brought together in the judgment clearly implicate a relation. But what is emphasised from the standpoint of Advaita-Vedānta is that it is the underlying meaning and not the mere relational form of judgments which is the real determinant of the import of propositions—whether the knowledge expressed therein is relational or non-relational in character. The crucial instance of this is to be found in such well-known judgments as 'this is the same Devadatta' (सोऽयं देवदत्तः) or 'thou art that' (तत्त्वमसि)—which though entering into the relationship of subject and predicate do yet remain non-relational in respect of their resultant knowledge. (निर्विकल्पकं ससर्गानवगाहिज्ञानम्).

In view of the fact that a rigorous distinction between Indeterminate (निर्विकल्प) and Determinate (सर्विकल्प) knowledge has been enforced in Eastern as well as Western philosophy, something more than a passing notice is here called for. In the first instance we can class together the Buddhists, Śaṅkara and Kant so far as they agree in holding the indeterminate state to be a pure manifold. The determinations (विकल्पाः) are extraneous additions and the manifold, when schematised, gives only phenomena. The agreement extends so far only. Kant holds that the 'manifold of sense' arises on the action of the things in themselves (*Dinge an sich*), which are different from, but transcendently not less real than, the principle of consciousness. According to Śaṅkara, however, the manifold is a determination in *chaitanyam* (चेतनम्) which is to be ascribed to the process of *adhyāsa* (अध्यासः) or illusory superimposition conditioned by *māyā* (माया). But *māyā*, unlike Kant's *Ding an sich* has not the same transcendental reality as 'Brahman,' for

Brahman is *sat* (सत्) or the Reality, while *māyā* is indeterminate as a category, and thus ineffable (संदेहग्राननिर्वचनीया). According to the Buddhists, again, the manifold is a determination in the primal Void or Negation (शून्यम्) and arises by a process of negation within Negation. We can, on the other hand, place the Naiyāyikas, Rāmānuja and Hegel in a class apart, so far as they unanimously believe that in determinate perception there emerges nothing that is adventitious or foreign but that which has a prior implicit existence in the indeterminate state. According to the Naiyāyikas, the indeterminate perception is the first stage in the process of perception, and is something of which we are not conscious directly. It is something whose existence is inferred from the existence of determinate perception, of which the indeterminate perception is the indispensable background or logical *prius*. The indeterminate perception reveals the things with their characteristics and universals, but not being associated with any name, it is more or less indistinct. It has been sometimes called *ālocanajñānam* (आलोचनज्ञानं) which is indeterminate to begin with, and comparable to the knowledge of children and of the dumb, like the product of something inarticulate.<sup>1</sup> The categories such as 'generic nature' (जातिः) etc., that lie implicit in the indeterminate stage, are explicitly predicated, in indeterminate perception, of their proper subjects in the form of judgment. The judgment in determinate perception thus does not import anything new or foreign, but states only explicitly in the relational form what is already implicitly present in the content in a non-relational form. The Naiyāyikas further sub-divide the relational consciousness into *vyavasāya* (व्यवसायः) or determinate perception and *anuvyavasāya* (अनुव्यवसायः), self-conscious perception. The former gives only the cognition of an object ; in it the form which is implicit in a content is explicitly related to it as predicate to a subject. The latter, however, is the cognition that I am aware of this cognition and succeeds the former :

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1 "अज्ञिज्ञाआलोचनज्ञानं प्रथमं निर्विकल्पकम् ।  
 बाह्यमूकादिविज्ञानसदृशं सुखवस्तुजम् ॥"

in it the relating activity itself is made the object of cognition. Hegel also agrees with the Naiyāyikas in recognising the forms and categories as not something foreign or alien, but as already lying implicit in the indeterminate state, only waiting to be made explicit. From the Hegelian point of view this passage from the implicit to the explicit is itself something necessitated by the nature of the content. It is, in the technical phraseology of Hegel's philosophy, the inner dialectic of the Idea. With the Naiyāyikas, on the contrary, it is the relating activity of the thinker and, not the necessity of the content that brings about this transition. Lastly, Rāmānuja agrees with Hegel and the Naiyāyikas in recognising the prior implicit existence of the forms and categories in determinate knowledge, which are made explicit in the determinate. But the passage from the implicit to the explicit stage is not, in his opinion, due to the inner dialectic of the Idea (as with Hegel), nor the mere result of the relating activity of the thinking mind (as with the Naiyāyikas) but something more—the meditation of experience. With Hegel, the 'mediation' in question is the self-mediation of the Idea, that is, of the content in its ideality of truth. With Rāmānuja, however, there is in experience, something arbitrary and thus not implied from the beginning in the nature of the content which is mediated. Hence, there is no such thing as indeterminate knowledge (निर्विशेष ज्ञान) in Rāmānuja. All knowledge, so far as it is knowledge, is determinate, and expressible in the typical judgment form 'this is thus' (इदमित्यम्) —corresponding to its European equivalent in which the 'that' always implies the 'what.' Even in the indeterminate (निर्विकल्प) state some at least of the determinations (विशेषण) are present; while in the determinate state, the determinations are multiplied. Thus the distinction resolves, in the end, into a question of 'more or less' determination—that is to say, a distinction of degree only and not one of kind.

Here Rāmānuja lays his finger on a thorny question in present-day epistemology. Even Bradley, the ardent advocate of the necessity of immediate experience 'for psychology and

metaphysics,' (who complimented Prof. Stout on his similar insistence on the 'urgency' of it), was not slow to acknowledge 'the dilemma that, so far as I know of immediate experience, it does not exist, and that hence, whether it exists or not I could in neither case know of it.' The inherent difficulty of the notion is comparable to that experienced in introspecting a mental state in its original purity, or that encountered by Sāṃkhya in making the witnessing Self (साक्षिचेतनम्) an object of the witnessing consciousness (अहमव्यवधिषयं), or that realised by Kant in even referring to the 'things in themselves' (*Dinge an sich*) as the cause of the sense-manifold, without making a transcendent use of the categories of causality and substance. This very difficulty led Prof. Dawes Hicks to deny roundly (in the introduction he wrote to Prof. N. J. Lossky's treatise, 'The Intuitive Basis of Knowledge'), the existence of this elusive or nebulous 'immediate experience or consciousness of a given object prior to the exercise of any discriminative activity,' and therewith a distinction between "knowledge" and "experience" as drawn by all intuitionists, Eastern or Western. "Suffice it say" so observes Prof. Hicks, "that so far as I can see. not even the crudest, vaguest consciousness of a content can be accounted for, either psychologically or epistemologically, without calling to our aid in the exposition the notion of a discriminative activity which is, in essence, identical with the more elaborate activity which Professor Lossky describes as 'knowing'." Here Prof. Hicks appears to have proved his case by a covert *petitio principii*. If one reads between the lines, it will be found that his very language betrays him. To say that the vaguest consciousness of a content cannot be 'accounted for' without a discriminative activity on one part, is to assert a claim which has never been contested by any advocate of intuitionism. The point of Prof. Hicks's criticism derives all its plausibility from a clear exploitation of a peculiar methodological difficulty in psychology and epistemology—comparable to what is known as the 'ego-centric predicament.' There is, on the other hand, an ease and naturalness about Prof. Lossky's procedure, which give rise to



the impression that he did not think it at all necessary to demonstrate the existence of such a patent basis of knowledge.

Now, the unstable equilibrium in which immediate experience is always discovered to be, might be regarded as a reason against its existence or reality. The diverse elements that are held together in the non-relational unity, the felt whole of immediate experience, are destined to fall as under and put an end to the immediacy. This is what Bosanquet means by his assertion that immediate experience is a stage which must inevitably pass away. Bradley, however, thinks that the content of immediacy cannot evaporate all at once, but persists as a point of reference in the background. To quote his very words, "there is an immediate feeling, a knowing and being in one, with which knowledge begins; and, though this in a manner is transcended, it nevertheless remains throughout as the present foundation of my known world."<sup>1</sup> And it is to this foundation that all certainty belongs. 'If we have certainty anywhere' says Bradley, 'this seems obvious we have certainty in feeling. Whatever else may be doubted, at least we know what we feel.'<sup>2</sup> Thus in our search after truth, we cannot afford to leave certainty behind, and, for the matter of that, immediate experience, as the primary source thereof. That is why Śaṅkara insists so often on '*anubhūti*' (अनुभूतिः) as the highest court of appeal, having a functional similarity with immediate experience.

Now, so far as Śaṅkara is concerned, the primitive datum of experience, is the body of those common judgments as are expressible in the forms 'I am this' or 'this is mine.' "In mankind" so observes Śaṅkara, "this sort of judgments such as 'I am this' or 'this is mine' conditioned by false knowledge in the form of pairing together the true and the untrue is in-born, so that people transfer the very being and qualities of the one to the other, owing to their inability to discriminate

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<sup>1</sup> *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 236.

things that are different or discrete in their nature.”<sup>1</sup> This pairing of things that cannot be paired, implies the failure of discrimination which, evidently, attests the transcendence of that immediate or unreflecting stage of knowledge that is confessedly characterised by the absence of all discrimination. This marks the beginning of thought proper which has the judgment as its proper embodiment. Thus, every judgment, according to Śaṅkara, is both true and false as based upon the principle of *adhyāsa* (अध्यासः) or false ascription.

What, then, is the nature of this *adhyāsa* which pertains to the essence of all judgment and predication from the standpoint of Śaṅkara-Vedānta? Now, *adhyāsa* (which in the form of illusory perception [धनप्रत्यक्षं] has been discussed in detail by the *Vedānta-paribhāṣhā* in its psychological, epistemological and metaphysical aspects) has been defined by Śaṅkara as ‘the appearance in the form of remembrance of something already experienced in a different context’ (श्रुतिरूपः परत्र पूर्वदृष्टावभासः). Psychologically viewed, it is of the form of memory, although the coalescence of the represented object (of memory), as facilitated by perception of similarity and other subjective defects, with the object of presentation converts it into an actual perception. The object of this perception, metaphysically viewed, is the direct result of the *avidyā* (which is substantially one with this principle of *adhyāsa*) that serves in the Vedānta as the *principium individuationis*. As appearing to an experiencer, it necessarily involves judgment that expresses itself in the form of misattribution, and hence partakes of truth and error ; thus, the epistemological question of its validity or invalidity centres round the individual who is in the grip of illusion. Viewed in this light, *adhyāsa* or *avidyā* in a narrower sense, may fairly be rendered by the Bradleyan term ‘appearance’ which has, according to him, a two-fold meaning: “If you take it as implying an object and the

1 अन्योन्याश्रयान्नान्यात्मकतामन्योन्यधर्माशाध्यस्य तरेतराविवेकीनात्यन्तविविक्तयोर्धर्मधर्माक्षौ निष्पीडाननिमित्तः सत्यादृते मिथुनीकृत्याहमिदं ममेदमिति नैसर्गिकोऽयं लोकाव्यवहारः  
-Introduction to V.S.

appearance of something to some one, then all appearance is at once both truth and error, for appearance in this sense involves a judgment, however rudimentary, but the term is used in a much wider sense, and you have appearance wherever, and so far as, the content of anything falls outside of its existence, its 'what' goes beyond its 'that.'<sup>1</sup>

In order to elucidate fully the nature of Śaṅkara's *adhyāsa*, reference may be made to the various theories of illusion current in the different schools of Indian philosophy. In the first place, the doctrine of *akhyāti* (अख्यातिः) that is current among the philosophers of the Mīmāṃsā and the Śāṅkhya school asserts that in an illusion *e.g.* of 'silver' (रजतं) in a 'nacre' (शुक्लिका), there is nothing positive except the experience of 'silver' and experience of 'nacre' which, as experiences are real. The illusion is not due to any positive wrong knowledge, but the mere negative factor of non-apprehension of the difference between the two (due to certain subjective defects). This absence of discrimination (अख्यातिः or अविवेकः as the Śāṅkhya would put it) between the two leads to their confusion and identification. In the 'nacre-silver' illusion, for example, what is perceived is the 'nacre' and the percept revives memory-image of 'silver' (which it resembles). This memory-image, however, is not apprehended as such *i.e.* as distinct from the percept and the percept also is not apprehended as such, *i.e.* as distinct from the memory-image. This produces confusion and, as a result of this non-discrimination between the remembered 'silver' and the perceived 'nacre,' we think that we perceive the 'silver.' It is, however, the only tenable theory of illusion from the standpoint of Pluralists like the Mīmāṃsakas and the orthodox Śāṅkhya philosophers. According to the pluralists, there can be no genuine relation between the reals that are absolutely independent of one another. Hence, illusion, even as the mental ascription of the nature of one thing to another, is also impossible. The appearance of a positive relation is merely due to the non-apprehension of their differences. Hume seems

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<sup>1</sup> *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 250.

to have utilised this very doctrine while explaining the origin of the idea of personal identity. Hume's argument is that owing to the extreme rapidity with which the discrete mental states, succeed one another, they fail to be apprehended as discrete or different from one another, and this non-apprehension of their difference produces the impression that they are continuous implying a permanent spiritual entity called the Self. The nearest approach to the doctrine of *akhyāti* is the doctrine of the 'identity of indiscernibles,' formulated by Leibnitz, the uncompromising individualist, who holds the spiritual reals to be intrinsically different; what appears as 'identity' is really identity that follows upon the non-apprehension (or non-discernment) of the manifest differences that exist between the reals.

(2) According to the doctrine of *Anyathākhyāti* (or *Viparītakhyāti*) of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Yoga schools, there is in every illusion a judgment implying a positive relation or ascription of the nature of one thing to another and is not merely the negative fact of non-apprehension of the difference between the two. In the illusion of 'silver' in 'nacre,' there is the positive apprehension of 'nacre' as 'silver,' and not merely the non-apprehension of the difference between the 'nacre' and the 'silver.' It thus agrees with the doctrine of *akhyāti* in holding that the fact that I remember 'silver' is not noticed at the time of illusion, and thus there is the false identification of 'silver' (seen elsewhere) with the 'nacre' present before us.

(3) The doctrine of *Ātma-khyāti* lays down, however, that there is *khyāti* or some positive experience in illusion, but it is the experience of the object about which there is illusion. According to it, all objects of true as well as illusory perception spring from the psychical flow (विज्ञानसन्तानः), and thus are not anything external to it. The difference between a true and an illusory perception is traceable to different collocating conditions of this continuum. This explanation is flatly contradicted, as the Naiyāyika points out, by the perceived fact that illusion of silver in nacre arises in the form of 'this is silver.'

and not 'I am silver,' which it would have done on the Buddhistic hypothesis that knowledge imposes upon itself, irrespective of any external condition, the knower and the illusory percept.

(4) Lastly, the doctrine of *Anirvacanīya-khyāti* of the *Vedāntins* implies that the positive experience (स्वातिः) in illusion is neither of something existent (सत्) nor of something non-existent (असत्) but something falling outside the category of the existent and the non-existent (सदसद्भावननिर्वचनीया), a veritable logical indefinable.

Now, what is the essence or import of a proposition which, as the embodiment of a complete meaning, is constituted of a relation between terms that bear different meanings. The Advaita-Vedānta admits that the judgment, as the meaning of a proposition, has for its essential presupposition the relation between the meanings of its constituent terms<sup>1</sup>—the subject and the predicate (पदार्थसंनर्गात्मा वाक्यार्थः),—and the apprehension of the meaning presupposes an order of successiveness (क्रमवती प्रतिपत्तिः), as Saṃkara himself puts it.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, as the Bhāmati lays down so expressively, the terms indicating their respective meanings constitute the unity of the judgment as subservient to, and as the expression of, one unitary meaning.<sup>3</sup> In developing the point, the Bhāmati further declares that the function of terms, constituting a proposition, is not to be strictly confined to their respective meanings; had it been so, there would not have been the apprehension of the meaning of a proposition.<sup>4</sup> If the two terms 'horse' and 'running' (which we come across on analysing the proposition 'the horse is running') meant simply 'horse' and 'running' and nothing more, the mere juxtaposition of the two terms in question would not make 'the horse run.' It would be a 'dead' horse.

<sup>1</sup> Vide Bhāmati on Saṃkara's com. on V.S. IV. 1. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Com. on IV. 1. ii.

<sup>3</sup> पदानां स्वार्थमभिदधतामिकप्रयोजनवत्पदार्थपरतयैकवाक्यता—On Saṃkara's com. on V.S. I. 1. iv.

<sup>4</sup> नापिस्वार्थमात्रपरतयैव पदानां तथा सति न वाक्यार्थप्रत्ययः स्यात्—*Ibid.*

We cannot reconstitute the integral whole of meaning by the addition of its fractional parts, the terms, if they meant only what they stood for and nothing more. Mere self-centredness or selfishness (स्वार्थपरता) would not even run a sentence, much less society. As the social fabric cannot subsist for a moment if the individuals composing it be absolutely self-centred, so a proposition can not come into being and be the vehicle of a meaning (वाक्यार्थः), if the constitutive terms be absolutely self-centred in respect of their meaning. In point of fact, such a self-centred individual is a pure myth, an hypothetical something, a creature of mere theory, just as the term so confined within its meaning is an unreal fiction of the formal logician. An individual in isolation from society, as its natural medium of existence, is as much of an abstraction as the term apart from the proposition. Just as an individual has to 'die to live'—to die to its narrow, exclusive self-centred nature in order to live a wider life of self-denying ordination as a member of an organic whole, so every term of a proposition has to break through the shell of its self-centred meaning in order to be strictly a term, that is, a *terminus*, an element of a whole. As finely expressed by the *Bhāmati*: 'the terms convey the meaning of a proposition in the same way as do the faggots sustain a flame, for the purpose of cooking, by continually burning or negating themselves.'<sup>1</sup> It may be said to illustrate in a narrower compass the meaning of 'ideality of the finite.' There is thus a synthetic necessity (संसर्गपरत्वं), but it has not necessarily an active import (कार्यपरत्वं). The Indian pragmatist might thrust his head here and discover a pragmatic significance in the Vedāntic rendering of the import of propositions. But that would be going too far. Prof. Dewey even would not venture to go so far. All that it means is that the subject-term having in all cases a transitive force points to, or tends towards, or 'intends', to use a figurative expression, the predicate-term. There is mutual expectation (आकांक्षा) or 'syntactical connexion' in the grammarian's sense, between the subject and the predi-

1 पाकिज्जालिबकाष्ठानां पदार्थप्रतिपादनम्—On Śaṅkara's com. on V. S., I. 1. iv.

cate, and this synthetic connexion between them in respect of meaning has its basis in 'objective intention' (सात्पर्यविषयत्वम्) of the propositional knowledge.

This view of the Import of Propositions serves as the prolegomena to a judicious construction or apprehension of the Vedāntic doctrine of 'Tattvamasi' (तत्त्वमसि) or 'that art thou', which contains in a nut-shell, within the compass of three words, the teaching of Śaṅkara-Vedānta. The ground is first of all cleared of all possible misunderstandings by way of the initial warning that the mere propositional, that is, relational form in which the doctrine is couched should not prejudice us against its non-relational significance, which alone counts, and not the relation of terms, in the matter of determining the true import of a proposition. The text 'तत्त्वमसि' is not the assertion of a synthetic connexion or of an identity-in-difference which it looks like, but has for its essence an integral, undifferentiated identity of meaning (अखण्डार्थत्वम्) which makes it, in all conceivability a non-relational or supra-relational whole that alone gives us the true knowledge of ultimate Reality.<sup>1</sup> Reality which is the ultimate goal of Truth is according to Vedānta, a non-relational whole, a whole of *chaitanya* or Experience, eternally self-identical in nature and expressible in the form: A is A. There must, therefore, be an analytical necessity between the subject and the predicate of a proposition if it is to claim ultimate truth. Now, the Vedāntic (तत्त्वमसि) is not simply an analytical proposition, much less a verbal or tautologous assertion, but a synthetic proposition in which the subject and the predicate are not different from one another. It is a peculiar type of proposition, *sui generis* or unique of its kind, not coming within the purview of ordinary logic Eastern or Western, which recognises the dichotomous division of propositions into analytical (verbal) or synthetical (real) propositions with no *tertium quid* in between them. It may strictly be called—to coin a new phrase—an analytico-synthetic proposition. It is, to begin with, synthetical to the learner, the disciple who

<sup>1</sup> 'अखण्डार्थत्वम्' इति संसर्गावगादि यथार्थज्ञानजनकत्वम्—*Vedānta-paribhāṣā*, chap. I.

is being newly initiated to the sacred lore of the Vedānta, but is analytical to the preceptor or *Guru* who has realised its analytic necessity only in ecstatic intuition, on the other side of all discursive thought, and necessarily of all judgment-forms. If knowledge, as the Vedānta has it, is revelation, the advancement of knowledge must be viewed as progressive initiation into truth, which is ultimately in perfect harmony with reality. All revelation, in point of fact, is *ad modum recipientis*, that is to say, proportionate to the receptive power of the person to whom something is revealed. This epistemological truth is implicit in the celebrated doctrine of *adhikāribhedaḥ* (अधिकारिभेदः) or the law of accommodation which, however, steers clear of the inherent subjectivism of the Protagorean *Homo Mensura*. It rather leans towards the Bradleyan doctrine of 'Degrees of Truth,' believing, as it does, that the absolute distinction of truth and error, when measured by value, gives way to one of degree. But Śaṅkara hastens to add that the conception of degrees has meaning only for finite beings apprehending things. It is better, therefore, to speak of the degrees of adequacy with which Reality is apprehended, and such apprehensions are endlessly various. It is this fact that is rather inelegantly expressed by the phrase 'degrees of truth', for degrees are applicable rather to correctness than to truth, to beliefs or apprehensions (प्रतिपत्तिः) as Śaṅkara would call them, than to judgments. There are, therefore, only degrees of completeness in our apprehension of objects, and degrees of correctness in our beliefs about them. Indeed, the assumption of the reality of Degrees, whether honorary or otherwise, looks more like an academic prejudice than a matter of universal recognition. Such was clearly Śaṅkara's position when he affirmed that 'the scripture, wishing to educate people about the primary or real self adapts itself to the popular understanding in so far as it refers to the body which, though other than the self, is by the dullards indentified therewith ; it then proceeds from the body to another self, and then another and so on, each successive representation having the same form as the preceding one, just as the statue possesses the same form of the mould



into which the molten brass had been poured ; then, again to another one, always representing the not-self as the Self for the purpose of easier apprehension ; and it winds up its teaching by inculcating that the innermost self which consists of pure bliss is the real Self.<sup>1</sup>

We cannot afford to ignore here the divergent estimates that have been made of the Vedāntic text of (तत्त्वमसि). Some have been staggered at the acceptance of the identity 'with a literalness that is appalling'.<sup>2</sup> Some,<sup>3</sup> again, have detected in it nothing but 'subjective idealism upon which the whole doctrine finally depends.' Without poaching into the domain of theology and metaphysics, we may say that the Vedāntic *Tattva-masi* (तत्त्वमसि) is more of the nature of a precept than a doctrine, and as such it is a cryptic utterance, comprehending nevertheless in an implicit form, the whole development of the religious consciousness. It ushers itself as a precept and ends by being a concrete intuition or experience. Is it not in the same vein that Jesus of Nazareth preached "Be ye, therefore, perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect," for he realised in the fullness of his experience and declared "I and my Father are one." There are undoubtedly persons who will throw up their hands in holy horror at the profanity of this blasphemous comparison, and point out with bated breath that 'I and my father are one' can only be uttered by the Son of God. But what the Sāṃkhya-Vedānta will urge by way of retort is this: "Why not extend the same privilege to all men who are admittedly the sons of God that may equally say, with that ideal Man: 'I am one with the Supreme Being' (सोऽहमस्मि)". That is why Sāṃkhya criticising the *Pañcarātra* theory of four-fold emanation or incarnation of Lord Vāsudeva observes: "Nor are the

1 मुख्यमेव ह्यात्मानमुपदिदिषु शास्त्रं लोकबुद्धिमनुसरदन्नमयं शरीरमनात्मानमत्यन्त-मूढानामात्मत्वेन प्रसिद्धमनूय मूषानिविक्तद्रुततायादप्रतिमावत् ततोऽन्तरन्ततोऽन्तरमित्येव पूर्वेषु पूर्वेषु समानमुत्तरमुत्तरमनात्मानमात्मैति यादयत् प्रतिपत्तिसौकर्यापेक्षया सर्वान्तरं मुख्यमानन्दमयमात्मानमुपदिदेशेति शिष्टतरम् ।—Com. on V.S.I. I. xii.

2 e.g. Prof. Howison in the 'Conception of God'.

3 Royce, *The World and the Individual*, Vol. I., p. 165.

incarnations of the Lord to be restricted to the number four, on account of the whole of this universe, beginning with the Absolute or Brahman and ending with a blade of grass, being regarded as the incarnation of the Lord.<sup>1</sup> Thus, orthodox Christianity sticks to a uni-personal, while the Vedānta accepts an omni-personal incarnation of God. Whether that interpretation of incarnation is true or defensible, we do not presume to affirm. All that we can do is to content ourselves with the impartial testimony of a Christian thinker of the eminence of Prof. Pringle-Pattison who is decidedly of the opinion that "we are far too apt to limit and mechanize the great doctrine of Incarnation which forms the centre of the Christian faith."<sup>2</sup> It is the Christian mystic Coventry Patmore that seems to have risen to the height of this great doctrine of Incarnation so far as he holds that 'the one secret, the greatest of all, is the doctrine of Incarnation, regarded not as an historical event which occurred two thousand years ago, but is an event which is renewed in the body of every man who is in the way to the fulfilment of his original destiny.'<sup>3</sup>

To sum up, then, what the analysis of experience yields is the recognition of the degrees of adequacy in our apprehension (प्रतिपत्तिः) of objects, and the corresponding degrees of correctness in our beliefs about them. This argues, in ultimate reference, to difference in the powers of apprehension conditioned by differences in the psychical equipments of the knowers. Says Śaṅkara 'although one and the same Self is hidden in all beings, the movable and the immovable, yet owing to gradual rise of excellence of the minds which form the limiting conditions (of the Self), the scripture declares that the Self, although eternal and immutable, reveals itself in a graduated scale or hierarchy of spiritual beings, and thus appears as characterised by varying degrees of dignity and

1 न चेते भगवद्व्यूहान्तुःस'ख्यायामवतिष्ठेरन् ब्रह्मादिसत्त्वपर्यन्तस्य समस्तस्यैव जगतः भगवद्व्यूहत्वात्—Com. on V.S. II. 2. xlv.

2 *Idea of God*, p. 157.

3 *The Road, the Root and the Flower*.

power.<sup>1</sup> These differences, again, lead to the recognition of differences between *adhikārīs* i.e. qualified or rightful recipients. Finally, 'these differences in respect of *adhikārīs* are known to have been determined by (differences in respect of) the capabilities of desiring and reception.'<sup>2</sup> Thus, while we have in Śaṅkara-Vedānta the recognition of a cosmic unity, it is not at variance with gradations in value, but it exhibits what may be called an ascending scale or hierarchy of values which has its foot on earth and its culminating apex in heaven. That seems to be the metaphysical position in which an epistemological analysis of experience lands Śaṅkara. But he retrieves the force of this suggestion by the unambiguous assertion that the Absolute or the Perfect in itself can have no degrees, for there can be no more or less in perfection.<sup>3</sup>

It is not to be apprehended, however, that we shall have in this law of accommodation (*adhikāribheda*) a fresh recrudescence and justification of caste-distinction in this already caste-ridden land—as the veritable last straw on the camel's back. The doctrine of *adhikāribheda*, construed epistemologically, has no such pernicious association in itself. It is only when it loses mobility and stiffens into artificial social stratification that it becomes the prolific source of mischief. Further, the distinction between an esoteric and an exoteric philosophy, which is fathered upon this doctrine seems to have its remote ancestor in Plato who has in the *Republic* prescribed Mythology 'for the Many' and Philosophy 'for the few.' The ingrained intellectual aristocratism of this doctrine will not perhaps be palatable to the democratic temper of our age. But then one has to reckon that the *Demos* is never spiritually creative, and if all philosophies are creations, we must look in the end to the select few, the intellectual aristocrats, the 'heroes' in the Carlylean

1 अथर्वक आत्मा सर्वमृतेषु स्वावरजनेषु गूढः तथापि चित्तोपाधिविशेषतारतम्या  
आत्मनः कूटस्थमित्यस्यैकवपस्याप्युत्तरोत्तरमाविष्कृतस्य तारतम्यमेश्वर्यशक्तिविशेषः श्रूयते  
—Com. on V.S. I. 1. xi.

2 अविज्ञाद्यार्थित्वमनर्थोद्दिक्तमधिकारितारतम्यम्—Com. on V.S. I. 1. iv.

3 अनाधेयातिशयवन्नान्यवपलात्—Com. on V.S. I. 1. iv.

sense, for an intellectual construction of Reality,—in a word, for our enlightenment and edification. But that is another matter. What is worth noting in this doctrine of *adhikāribheda* is the epistemological basis it provides for an ethical and a metaphysical construction of the Advaita-Vedānta.

The criteriology of the Vedānta also points in that direction. The validity or evidentiary value of the valid sources of knowledge (प्रमाणाणि) depends upon the appropriateness of the provinces in which they are employed, and Śaṅkara clearly recognises that 'the *pramāṇas* have their application or dominion in their own spheres.'<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, just as there are degrees of correct apprehension, so there are criteria of truth, and no one absolute criterion of truth. Thus we can not say in an off-hand manner that the scriptural authority (श्रुतिप्रामाण्या) is superior absolutely, to the criterion furnished by the senses or *vice versa*. As Śaṅkara fully acknowledges, 'the *Śrutis* are not authoritative with regard to the objects of other criteria (प्रमाणांशराणि). It is not possible to maintain by means of a hundred instances that fire is cold or that the sun does not give light, because Reality will be known by other sources of knowledge. No one source of knowledge is contradicted by another source of knowledge. Every source of knowledge reveals the truth which is not the province of some other sphere of knowledge.'<sup>2</sup> It is no mere involuntary concession wrung out of a quondam Revelationist, but it is a statement fully in keeping with the main drift of Vedāntic epistemology.

The Absolute, however, requires no criterion, no proof, being itself the logical *prius* of all proofs or criteria of truth. "It is upon Self" as observes Śaṅkara, "that the whole structure of evidences or proofs is based (प्रमाणादिव्यवहाराश्रयत्वात्), and thus it is proved or established previous to all proofs."<sup>3</sup> It is thus self-evident and self-evidencing. It is Reality as the *terminus ad quem* of all pursuit of truth, and from this standpoint we recognise the force of the dictum: *verum index sui*

1 सविद्ययूरादिप्रमाणाणि—Com. on Brihad. Up. III. 3. Intro.

\* 2 Com. on Brihad. Up., II. 1. ii & xx.

3 Comp. on V.S. II. 3. vii.

or that truth is its own criterion. All our aims and aspirations, theoretical or practical are fulfilled in this highest experience man is capable of. If this revelation of Reality in its wholeness, which serves as the bed-rock of all evidence and certitude is explained away as an illusion or a phantom of creative imagination, Śaṅkara would readily meet the contingency with the remark that if it be an illusion, then that illusion is the truth itself. We can have no other criterion of truth.

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## LECTURE VI.

### THE DIALECTIC OF THE VEDĀNTA.

In the prolegomena to his metaphysics (अध्यासभाष्य), Śaṅkara has, with unerring philosophical insight, made common experience (लोकव्यवहारः) the settled point of departure in the philosophic 'voyage of discovery'—the veritable Pilgrim's Progress of philosophy. "Although" to quote the very opening words of the prolegomena, "a mutual transference of the qualities of the Ego and the Non-Ego (the *meum* and the *tuum*) which are *prima facie* opposed to one another as light and darkness is obviously wrong, yet in mankind the use of judgments such as 'I am this', 'This is mine' conditioned by false knowledge in the form of coupling the true (the Ego, the Subject) and the untrue (the Non-Ego, the Object) is inborn, thus transferring the very being and qualities of the one to the other on account of a failure of the power to discriminate things that are discrete in their nature." Now, the real problem of philosophy, indeed the great problem of Śaṅkara-Vedānta, is the search after the truly obvious—not the immediate which is insistent with its claims on our recognition. It springs from the demand to be logical; and the immediate so far as it is the primary datum, the naïve apprehension, cannot, for aught we know, stand the scrutiny of logic. Śaṅkara does not, as is usual with the average philosophic thinker, succumb to the lure of the specious philosophical ultimates—the supposed solid *गोचरं* of 'fact', 'life' or 'self',—but runs the whole gamut of our experience in search after the truly real, which alone is the truly obvious. The way to achieve this is to take up a definite attitude towards experience; while to persist in clinging to our initial standpoint is to be debarred from the City of God and to rot in the City of Destruction (निःशेषान् प्रतिपद्येता न चैवेयात्). What Śaṅkara proposes to do herein is simple enough. Even at the risk of a truism, Śaṅkara exhorts us

to begin, in our attitude to experience, by putting the very central thing in the centre, and respecting the claim of the obvious which is too often neglected. We all speak glibly of 'Self' and pretend to be fully conversant therewith, but few are in possession of the truth about it, says Śaṅkara. Indeed, we can very well hazard the paradox that in life the greatest truths are assented to, but not believed. Hence what is necessary is a 'transvaluation,' but not a transcendence of the whole realm of experience—not to seek the Real behind or beyond it, but as the informing life and spirit thereof. We certainly feel error everywhere and yet, again, we have a hold on truth. Herein lies the 'secret' of the dialectic of the Vedānta.

(i) *Dialectic of Experience.*

The question of crucial importance in metaphysics is undoubtedly the nature of the Given. Before entering upon the discussion as to what is actually given in experience, it is profitable to enquire into the presuppositions of experience as formulated by the Advaita School of Vedānta. It is instructive to note here parenthetically that the Śaṅkarite acceptance of the term 'Experience' or (चेतनम्) (*Chaitanyam*) as identical with Reality or Brahman (ब्रह्म) is substantially in agreement with the Bradleyan view of it as distinguished from consciousness. 'To my mind' says Bradley, 'consciousness is not co-extensive with experience'; for, consciousness, in the narrow sense, as the state in which we experience a not-self, invariably carries with it the implication of 'subject and object' as 'correlated in experience' while experience is a totality 'which includes the correlation', there being 'even experience in feeling where self and not-self are not yet present and opposed.' The distinction in question is best expressed by the Vedāntic distinction between pure (सुखं, निरुपाधिकं, निरवच्छिन्नं) and stratified (रुपाधिकं, अवच्छिन्नं) consciousness, between knowledge as a timeless Reality and manifestation of such knowledge which belongs to time, specifying in each of the latter the metaphorical extension of the meaning of the term 'consciousness'

or 'knowledge.' All determinate knowledge involves, as the *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* has it, a tripartite stratification of pure consciousness: *pramāṭṛ-chaitanyam* (प्रमादचैतन्य) or determinate self-consciousness, corresponding to the 'subject of European philosophy, *vṛtti-chaitanyam* (वृत्तिचैतन्य) or modes of consciousness and *vishaya-chaitanyam* (विषयचैतन्य) or the empirical object.

Now, as regards the ultimate postulates or principles of Experience, the first to be noted is that no philosophical criticism (पेक्षा, परीक्षा) is worth the name unless it can account for ordinary experience (लोकव्यवहारः). This is hinted at by Śaṅkara in his prolegomena, and was later taken up in earnest by Śrīharsha with a difference of emphasis. The appeal here, it is to be further noted, is not merely restricted to enlightened opinion—the opinion of the 'expert' judges (प्रेक्षावन्तः) as in J. S. Mill—but extended to what is known as 'vulgar' experience or common sense (सर्वजनप्रसिद्धिः, लोकाप्रसिद्धिः). Secondly, the twin principles—rather the positive and negative aspects of one and the same principle—of जगत्प्रकाशः and जगदान्ध्यापरिहारः postulate that there is a world and that the world as Appearance must be accounted for. This is what the Germans seek to convey by that expressive compound word *Welt-anschauung* of which an exact English word is lacking. Indeed जगदान्ध' is the *reductio ad absurdum* of a system of philosophy and is frequently made use of by Śaṅkara in his polemics against rival systems of thought. In his commentary on *Hastāmālakam* (हस्तामलकम्), a metrical work of apocryphal origin (although ascribed by some to one of Śaṅkara's immediate disciples bearing the same name), Śaṅkara (whose authorship of the commentary, however, is contested on inconclusive evidence) illustrates the importance of the postulate of जगत् प्रकाशः thus: 'if the opponent were to call for evidence as to the self-luminousness of *Ātman*, we should assert (that the evidence in question is) the fact of experience—the universally experienced fact of appearance of the world. Here knowledge together with the rest of the universe being the object of knowledge is not self-revealing (i.e. unconscious), and, as such, it unmistakably follows that the world as Appearance presupposes



the illuminating power of the *Ātman* like that of the sun,—just as the sun being self-revealing reveals the world itself, so is verily the supreme Self.<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that Vācaspati Miśra (to select one from amongst many others of the Advaitic persuasion) employs in a similar context in the *Bhāmati* the same postulate: “Is that principle unconscious or self-luminous which brings about the revelation of the objective world and in whose medium the objects and the Self reveal themselves? If unconscious, both would indistinguishably be referred to as unconscious, there being left no way to distinguish in whose light which shines and thus would the entire world be dark to us.”<sup>2</sup> Once again: ‘Of a certainty is to be admitted a directly self-conscious Self for without its manifestation all else would remain unmanifest and thus would ensue the unknowability of the world,’<sup>3</sup> Next in importance is the postulate of validity or veracity of consciousness (संवित्) as the source of our knowledge of the Real, as Vācaspati Miśra puts it (संविदेव वस्तूपगमे शरणम्). This he states more explicitly in the *Bhāmati*: तत्त्वपक्षपातो हि स्वभावो विद्याम्<sup>4</sup> i.e. ‘intelligence or consciousness has an innate aptitude for truth.’ It affords not an inapt comparison in respect of functional similarity with the Cartesian postulate of ‘*veracitas Dei*’ or the Humean ‘instinct.’ The last, though not the least important, is the postulate of जगद्देवित्वोपपत्तिः—that the world as manifold is to be accounted for, instead of being explained away as is often done by Absolute monists or Advaitists on the pretext of explanation of the same. This is, as we shall presently see,

1 ननु आत्मनश्चेतनत्वे किं मातृ. जगत्प्रकाश इति ब्रूमः. जगत् प्रकाशते इति सर्वजनप्रसिद्धम् यत् ज्ञानादीनां ज्ञेयत्वेन जडत्वात् आत्मप्रकाशेनैव जगत्प्रकाश इति निश्चितं भवति सवित्प्रकाशवत्, यथा सविता स्वयं प्रकाशमानो जगत् प्रकाशयति परमात्मापीति—इत्यात्मलोकम् ।

2 योऽयमर्थप्रकाशः भूलं यन्निर्गन्धं आत्मा च प्रवेति स किञ्चिदः स्वयंप्रकाशो वा । जडश्चेद्विषयात्मानावपि जडाविति कस्मिन् किं प्रकाशितं अविशिष्टात् इति प्राप्तमात्मनश्चैव जगत्. —On Śaṅkara's Introduction to *Vedānta-Sūtras*.

3 अत्रयं चिदात्मा अपरोक्षोऽभ्युपेतव्यस्तददर्शायां सर्वस्याऽप्रधानेन जगदात्म्यप्रसंगादित्युक्तम् ।—*Ibid*.

4 Śaṅkara's Introduction to the *Brahma-sūtras*.

a very hard nut to crack for the Advaitist of the Śaṅkarite School and he is at considerable pains to bring this feature of our experience into line with the tenet of 'unqualified substance' (निर्विशेषवत्)—the central concept in the Advaita dialectic.

Now, the question recurs: what is it that is actually given in experience? It is, according to Śaṅkara, pure undifferentiated Being (सत्ता or सत्) that is the Real, everything that is additional or adventitious thereto is non-real. There is admittedly diversity in our experience in the shape of 'षट्ज्ञान' 'षट्ज्ञान' and so forth, and in the absence of any apprehension of difference all cognition and, for the matter of that all judgments would melt into one. Śaṅkara rises equal to the occasion, and replies that there persists in all items of knowledge, howsoever varied otherwise, pure Being in indissoluble union with Consciousness (ब्रह्मभूतिः, बोधः, चैतन्यं), and it is from the fact of its persistence (ब्रह्मवर्त्तमानत्वात्) that it can claim to be termed the Real or Reality. It is to be carefully noted, however, that the term *jñānam* (ज्ञानं) cannot figure in this context as a synonym of *bodhaḥ* or *chaitanyam*. The author of the commentary on *Hastāmālakam* is quite outspoken on the point: By *bodhaḥ* (बोधः) is meant *chaitanyam* (चैतन्यं), not, however, is *jñānam* (ज्ञानं) to be taken as *chaitanyam* (चैतन्यं) for, as being known it itself is unconscious like jars etc. (बोधी हि नाम चैतन्यमभिहितं न च ज्ञानं चैतन्यं तस्य ज्ञेयत्वे न घटादिवत् जडत्वात्).

To the critic who challenges this much too facile identification of Being and Consciousness, Śaṅkara has nothing to offer by way of arguments except an appeal to the authority of the *Śruti*, as in the following typical passage:<sup>1</sup> "Nor can it be said that Brahman already characterised as Real (Being) cannot be characterised as Consciousness, for that (characterisation) would render nugatory such scriptural texts as 'the Supreme Being is of the very essence of knowledge.' How,

1 न च सत्त्वत्त्वमेव ब्रह्म न बोधत्वत्वमिति शङ्का वक्तुम्। विज्ञानधन एवेत्यादि श्रुतिवेद्यर्थप्रसंगात्। कथं वा निरस्तचैतन्यं ब्रह्म चैतन्यस्य जीवस्यात्मलेनोपदिश्येत नापि बोधत्वत्वमेव ब्रह्म न सत्त्वत्त्वमिति शङ्का वक्तुम्, 'बोधीत्येवोपलब्धव्यः' इत्यादिश्रुतिवेद्यर्थप्रसंगात्। कथं वा निरस्तसत्ताको बोधोऽभ्युपगम्येत।—Com. on V. S. III. 2. xxi.

again, can such a Brahman devoid of consciousness be spoken of as the inmost Being or Self of a self-conscious individual. Nor, again, can it be affirmed that Brahman already characterised as Consciousness can not be characterised as Being (Real), for that (characterisation) would have the effect of nullifying such scriptural texts as 'The Supreme Being to be apprehended as existing.' How, again, can a non-existent Consciousness be admitted"? Indeed it is characteristic of Śaṅkara to make a sparing use of dialectic so far as the constructive aspect of his philosophy is concerned; that is, however, very much in evidence in his classic refutation of rival systems of philosophic thought. This he did on principle, for it was his honest conviction that a dialectic basis of a philosophical superstructure was after all, an uncertain and precarious one, as being liable to demolition by another rival (तर्कसाधप्रतिष्ठानात्). Mere dialectic and reasoning unauthenticated by Śruti or Revelation cannot, as he rightly foresaw, lead to the establishment of any philosophical position worth the name. Hence (as already observed in an earlier section) Śaṅkara as a constructive philosophical thinker could not but leave to the long apostolic succession of his disciples—the faithful inheritors of the Advaita tradition—the task of providing a dialectical foundation of his system. With a remarkable fidelity surpassing that of Plato for his master Socrates, did these trustees carry out the mission entrusted to them. So we can unhesitatingly select any one at random from the solid block of successors, and make him the mouthpiece of Śaṅkara. It redounds to the credit of the Hindu tradition of intellectual honesty and fair-mindedness, that we must turn to Rāmānuja, his formidable rival and compeer, for one of the best logical and succinct expositions of Śaṅkara's system. It stands to this day as the lasting monument to the genius of Śaṅkara from the hands of one of those who "built better than they knew" and probably meant to. As to the justification of the identity of Being and Consciousness (सत् चतुर्विधं) in the Śaṅkarite sense, the argument that has been presented (by Rāmānuja and that can be fathered upon Śaṅkara with no loss of meaning or consistency)

is one by *reductio ad absurdum*. If Being and Consciousness were not identical, Being would be the 'object' (विषयः) of Consciousness, for Consciousness cannot *prima facie* be an object, it being eternally the subject *par excellence* (विषयी or साविचैतन्य); and self-manifest (स्वयंप्रकाशः)—self-evidencing and self-evidenced and so far independent absolutely. [As to the (स्वयंप्रकाशल) of consciousness, we need not labour here, as it has been thoroughly dealt with in an earlier reference]. The only alternative that is, therefore, possible is that Being should be the 'object' of Consciousness, and as such different (भिन्न) from Consciousness. But difference (भेदः) is a notion which is susceptible neither of perceptual verification nor of logical definition. Hence, Being and Consciousness are not different (i.e. non-identical), that is, are identical.

Now, the concept of Difference (भेदः), is the veritable *bête noire* of the Advaita Vedānta of the Śaṅkarite type, and thus its rejection has central importance for Śaṅkara. Here, as elsewhere, we should do best to begin with the Rāmānujist presentation of the case. In the first place, as he puts it, perception reveals to us non-differenced substance (निर्विशेषवस्तु) only. True it is that we do apprehend difference in such judgments as 'here is a jar', 'there is a cloth' etc. But we have to pause and enquire as to the way in which in the judgment 'here is a jar' an assertion is made about Being as well as some special form of Being. These implied judgments cannot both be founded on perception, for they are the results of acts of cognition taking place at different moments of time, while the perceptual apprehension is one indivisible, instantaneous act. We must therefore decide whether it is the essential nature (स्वरूपम्) or its difference (भेदः) from others that is the real object of perception. On closer inspection, however, it is found that we must adopt the first alternative, since the apprehension of difference presupposes the apprehension of the essential nature of the thing *plus* the remembrance of its counter-entities (प्रतियोगिनाम्). Hence we can safely conclude that difference is not apprehended perceptually i.e. not perceived (प्रत्यक्षम्). To put the thing more briefly, perception of the difference of A

from B presupposes the individually separate perception of the constituent terms A and B—difference being a *bona fide* relation. Granted that A *i.e.* the essential nature of a thing is perceived, it by no means follows that B *i.e.* the whole world of its counter-entities is like-wise perceived—which is *prima facie* absurd. Mere remembrance of the counter-entities synchronously with the perception of the essential nature of a thing cannot officiate for perception ; for, as the two conditions of एकदेशस्थत्वं and एककालीनत्वं (as the *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* rightly insists) have not been satisfied here, the alleged knowledge of the counter-entities cannot claim a presentative character. And it is a truism to assert that a relation cannot acquire or retain its integral character as perception unless both the terms be separately presented. It might be asked here : is it inconceivable that there should be in a perception elements partly presentative and partly representative seeing that Perception itself is a presentative-representative process ? Does not the perception of the essential nature of a thing *ipso facto* import, or amount to the perception of the absence of its counter-entities in that very thing ? Is not there, along with the perception of what a thing is, a collateral perception of what it is not ? Can not there be, in other words, a 'feeling' of difference, the alleged difference, though not consciously operative, operating all the same as the function of the associative process of discrimination ?

Śaṅkara would have nothing to do with that 'radical empiricism' of Mill, Spencer, James and even of the Vijñānavādins which leads them to answer the question in the affirmative. What Śaṅkara would urge against them is a studied ignorance of the real issue in a confusion of words. The mere 'feeling' of difference, the mere *function* of discrimination is not, as the *Advaitist* of the Śaṅkarite school would assert, the same thing as the consciousness of the *relation* of difference, the substantive consciousness of difference. The recognition of the 'difference' in question, is a conscious function, an intellectual synthesis, not merely an associative synthesis.

It may be argued, however, that the substantive presenta-

tion or perception of the essential nature of a thing, though not involving an explicit perception of the difference in question can yet involve, as a bye-product along with the percept of its locus, the implicit or subconscious percept of the absence of its counter-entities. Indeed the seemingly harmless, but effectively insidious, phrases 'implicit consciousness' 'unconscious reason' and the like are delightfully vague terms—terms, as Prof. Perry rightly complains, 'with indefinite potentiality' and, so charged, they have the pernicious effect of leading men astray from the pursuit of truth. They serve only to mystify the issues in the domain of philosophical thought. These no doubt have the badge of modernism, and under Protean masks, are made to work wonders in modern psychology as well as philosophy. Sick of the repetition *ad nauseam* of the adjective 'implicit'—the unmistakable legacy of a Hegel-weary age—Dr. L. P. Jacks faced the issue squarely in a significantly entitled article viz., 'Does Consciousness evolve?' in the Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society. It is interesting to follow the duel between him and Prof. Muirhead as fought out in the pages of the Hibbert Journal. The lesson that such wordy warfares drive home to our minds is that it is not yet too late in the day for us to profit by Bacon's classic warning against the *Idola Fori*, or Berkeley's injunction of drawing aside 'the veil of words' that we may hope to see things in their true light. Śaṅkara does not fall a victim to these seductive phrases; to play fast and loose or to dally with notions is a thing which strict intellectual honesty or a sense of 'the arduousness of Reality', as Śaṅkara had, would never permit. What does this *implicitness* mean, after all, from the point of view of the spontaneity of Self which is, be it remembered, the standpoint of Epistemology? When we are discussing the *prāmāṇyam* or truth of *bhedāḥ*, we must view it from the standpoint of the functioning or knowing self and for it 'implicitness' has no meaning. The terms 'implicit' and 'explicit' are hopelessly pinned down to an 'object-centric' world and can only hope to thrive therein, but they have absolutely no *locus standi* in the 'Ego-centric' world of the

Vedānta. As torn out of their proper context, and applied to the Vedānta, they acquire a metaphorical extension of meaning which renders them either irrelevant or at best misleading. Living, as it does, under the vertical glare of a full-orbed, Self-luminous *chaitanyam* (चैतन्य), the Vedānta does not offer any scope for smuggling in such contraband things under cover of a shadowy penumbra, of a 'marginal' or even of a 'fringe' of consciousness. It is conceded, however, that there is the percept of the 'abhāva' (अभावः) or absence of its counter-entity (along with perception of the thing), although it is neither the result of a process of perception directed towards it nor the result of an *implicit* process of perception. It is the result of a distinct positive function of the mind, known in Vedānta, as *Anupalabdhi* (अनुपलब्धिः).

Secondly, the notion of 'difference' (भेदः) is not *logically* definable. If it be real, it can either (1) be the essential nature (स्वरूपम्) of the thing which differs, or (2) an attribute (गुणः) of it. On the first supposition, it would follow that on the apprehension of the essential nature of a thing there would at once arise not only the judgment about its essential nature but also judgments as to its difference from all other things. But it might be urged that even when the essential nature of a thing is apprehended, the judgment 'this thing is different from other things' depends all the same on the remembrance of its counter-entities and until this remembrance functions the judgment of difference does not come into being. But this is inadmissible *ex hypothesi*. He who maintains that difference is nothing but 'the essential nature of a thing' has no right to assume a dependence on counter-entities: the judgment about difference can, on his view, depend on the counter-entities no more than the judgment about essential nature can. His view is committed to the proposition, howsoever assured, that the words 'jar' and 'different' in the judgment 'the jar is different' etc. are synonyms of each other.

(2) On the second supposition viz. that 'difference' is an attribute, we should have to assume that 'difference' possesses difference (i.e. is different) from the essential nature of a thing,

For otherwise it would be the same as the latter. And this latter difference would have to be viewed as an attribute of the first difference, and thus *ex hypothesi* different therefrom, and this would lead us to the postulation of a third difference and so on *ad infinitum*. Further, the view of difference as an attribute would imply that difference is apprehended on the apprehension of a thing distinguished by attributes such as generic character and so on, and at the same time that the thing thus distinguished is apprehended on the apprehension of difference, and this constitutes a logical see-saw. Hence it is concluded that 'difference' (भेदः) which can neither be perceived nor conceived is non-existent.

The notion of *bhedaḥ* came in for its final *coup de grâce*, from Śrīharsha (about 1190 A.D.), the Vedāntic Zeno. Śrīharshācāryya's famous polemical treatise *Khaṇḍanakhaṇḍakhādyam* achieved for Śaṅkara-Vedānta what Bradley's 'Appearance' did for English Absolutism. Indeed the negative dialectic of which Śrīharsha had set the classic model created a land-mark in the historic continuity of the Vedāntic tradition and was sedulously emulated by less known philosophic exponents of the same school. Now, according to Śrīharsha,<sup>1</sup> there are four possible ways of construing the notion of *bhedaḥ*, and none of these stands scrutiny. First, it may be construed (1) as *svarupabhedaḥ* (स्वपदभेदः), (as by Prabhākara and his school) according to which the 'jar' (घटः) differs from 'cloth' (पटः) by its very nature, so that 'the difference from cloth' must abide in the 'jar' i.e. in other words, the 'cloth' in the 'jar'—which is absurd on the very face of it; (2) as *anyonyābhāvaḥ* (अन्योन्वाभावः) or reciprocal non-existence (as by the Naiyāyikas and by Kumārila Bhatta and his followers), according to which there is 'the absence of jar' (घटाभावः) in the 'cloth' (पटः) and *vice versa*, so that in accordance with the law that the perception of the non-existence of a thing presupposes its counter-entity i.e. the existing thing, there would be the perception of 'jar' (घटः) in the cloth (पटः) i.e. they would be identical—which is

<sup>1</sup> *Khaṇḍana Khaṇḍa Khādyā*, chap. IV.



contradictory to our position ; (3) as *Vaidharmyam* (वैधर्म्यम्) according to which, there is divergence or mutual exclusiveness between the 'jar' and 'the cloth'. Now, if the divergence in the 'jar' be itself divergent from the divergence in the 'cloth', an infinite regress is under way ; or, if the two divergences be identical, the relation of divergence itself ceases to exist ; (4) as *prithaktva* (प्रथक्त्वम्) which is supposed to explain differences of things ; but here also the question arises as to whether 'separateness' resides in different things or similar ones, or whether it is identical with the thing in which it exists or not—and thus it also is not free from inconsistencies. It is unnecessary to follow up further the trail of the dialectic of *bhedaḥ* as it is to be found in Citsukha's *Tattvadīpikā*. Thus on the rejection of the notion of *bhedaḥ* the chief vantage-ground of Śaṅkara-Vedānta is gained. Now, the result so far yielded by the analysis of consciousness is the undifferentenced (निर्विशेषं) and self-manifest (स्वयंप्रकाशं) character of consciousness (चेतना) from which follow conjointly the eternal and changeless (कूटस्थमित्यत्र) nature of *caitanya*. The argument is simple enough : if the manifestation of consciousness proceeds from its own nature, and not as conditioned by anything else, its prior non-existence (प्रागभावः) at any time of its being is inconceivable. Nor can it be argued that it may exist and yet may not shine forth, depending, as it does, for its manifestation on association with a bodily vehicle and, by method of agreement in presence and in absence, this entails corporeality of consciousness. Śaṅkara admits the force of this contention but concludes, unlike the materialist, that association with body is to be understood as a co-operating condition only, and that even not as an absolute and invariable one, of the manifestation of consciousness, seeing that there is in the dreaming state when the body is inoperative, a varied cognisance.<sup>1</sup> In the same context, Śaṅkara adduces this conclusion in a more telling manner from the bare fact of one-ness of consciousness which is corroborated further by

1 एवञ्च सति देहभावे उपलब्धिर्भवत्यसति च न भवतीति न देहधर्मो भवितुमर्हतीति । उपलब्धभावेणापि प्रदोषादिवत् देहोपयोगो दृश्यते । निवेष्टेऽपि लब्धिर्देह स्वप्ने नावाविधोपलब्धिर्दृश्यं नात् ।—Com. on V. S. III. 3. 1v.

the testimony of such experiences as Recognition and Remembrance.<sup>1</sup> Although it is the argument from the fact of recognition (प्रत्यभिज्ञा) which is so convincingly pressed against the 'psychological atomism' of the Vijñānavādī Buddhist, Śaṅkara does not seem to have sufficiently recognised its importance and followed it up in its deeper epistemological implications with a view to their utilisation as elements in a metaphysical construction. Had he done that, he would have given an altogether different version of the primary datum of our experience, and a different analysis of the knowledge conveyed by the simple proposition— 'सोऽयं देवदत्तः'. There is something more than the bare fact of 'feeling' of identity between ('सु देवदत्तः' and 'अयं देवदत्तः'). What the *recognition* as imported by this proposition implies is the cognition of identity in spite of the manifest differences conveyed by the epithets ('सु' and 'अयं'). In fact, the full force of Recognition remains unaccounted for, unless the knowledge conveyed herein is presented as a *bona fide* judgment, as an identity-in-difference. Hence the analysis of Recognition is to be reckoned as a typical or crucial instance, symptomatic of the metaphysics underlying such analysis. Here, therefore, we stand at a parting of ways. The Rāmānuja-Vedānta would have knowledge as a judgment, as a *de facto* identity-in-difference expressible in the form: 'देवमित्यम्', while the Śaṅkara-Vedānta would construe knowledge as cognition, as knowledge of bare identity (वस्तुस्वरूपावधारणं) expressible in the form: A is A, which is, after all, a judgment in form only, but never in reality—for a judgment always makes it determinate. Indeed, Śaṅkara's view of *caitanyam* as a bare analytic unity devoid of all difference seems to be a transcendental version of the psychological atomism of *Vijñānavāda*—Self as one, eternal, changeless, self-manifest principle being nothing but the self-luminous, self-ineradicable and unique (सत्त्वस्व), unitary *Vijñānam* divested of its momentariness and raised to infinity. It is one of those

\* 1 नित्यत्वस्योपलब्धेरेकव्याप्त्या। अहमिदमद्रात्रमिति अवस्थान्तरयोगेऽप्युपलब्धत्वेन प्रत्यभिज्ञानात् आत्माद्युपपत्तेश्च—*Ibid.*

indelible finger-posts that indicate the still lingering influence of Buddhism upon Śaṅkara's thought.

Now the question that arises at this stage is that of consistency of this concept of *Nirviśeshavastu* (निर्विशेषवस्तु) with the admission of manifoldness of the world (जगद्वैचित्र्योपपत्तिः) and its eventual unreality (प्रपञ्चनिव्यालसिद्धिः). The fact of the world as manifold is pressed against the Subjective Idealism of the Yogācāra school of Buddhists, and Śaṅkara vehemently protests against the Vijñānavādin's method of tracing it up to the manifoldness of conative dispositions [constituting the instinctive basis of the psychic continuum] (वासनावैचित्र्यादिति). The real solution of the alleged inconsistency is to be had on the lines adopted in the *Advaitasiddhi*, the famous treatise bearing on Śaṅkara-Vedānta : "Here is the solution of the conflict of the notion of cosmic unreality with scriptural texts such as 'the world as manifold is real' etc. which, however, are to be construed in a negative reference and treated as a proposition having negation for its object, by way of stultification of its primary meaning and restoration of the thing negated..... Although, Being and Non-Being are co-ordinate in respect of their mutual exclusiveness, affirmation, being self-sufficient, does not presuppose negation. Negation, however, being relative to its counter-entity presupposes affirmation. Hence such (negative) Śruti texts as 'not this' 'not this' do depend on positive texts, but there is no such dependence on the part of positive ones on the negative.<sup>1</sup> Thus the reality ascribed in Śaṅkara-Vedānta to the world as manifold (जगद्वैचित्र्यं) is an empirical one, and this empirical reality does in no way conflict with its transcendental unreality (प्रपञ्चनिव्यालं). This reality is, after all, mind-dependent, and this manifoldness appears to be an incontestable fact grounded in

1 आवाभावायोः परस्परविरुद्धरूपत्वे समेऽपि भावयद्वा निरपेक्षत्वात् नाभावयद्वा नपेक्षते । अभावयद्वास्तु सप्रतियोगितया भावयद्वा नपेक्षते । अतो 'नेति' 'नेति' श्रुतेरिव सत्त्वश्रुत्यपेक्षा न सत्त्वश्रुतेर्नेतिश्रुत्यपेक्षा अन्यथा अन्योन्याश्रयापत्तिः ।..... 'विद्वन् सत्यम् इत्यादिस्तु निषेध-विषयसमत्वेन स्वार्थतात्पर्यरहितत्वेन च निषेध्यसमर्पणद्वारेण निषेधवाक्याशेषतया उचितैव । —'आरामनाथोद्धारः', "अद्वैतसिद्धिः", प्रथमपविच्छेदः ।

the very nature of Being, as an evolute thereof (परिणामः) from our limited point of view. But we forget that this is a distinction within *Caitanyam*, and from the standpoint of the whole where this duality between the knower and the known has been transcended, this so-called 'evolution' ceases to have a meaning and the alleged evolved series in its entirety appears to be an unreal superimposition, known technically as *vivartah* (विवर्तः) on a Being which is eternally one, undifferentiated and changeless. In short, 'evolution' (परिणामः) is evidently a temporal category, strictly limited to the finite and, as such, meaningless in a wider reference, as applied to the whole. Hence the admission of the empirical reality of manifoldness, far from being irreconcilable, finds according to Śaṅkara-Vedānta, ultimate explanation in the notion of its unreality from the standpoint of the whole. Propositions purporting to affirm the reality of the manifold are but veiled negations of its reality. Hence they are not to be interpreted in an absolute sense, as they are sometimes done; and on the strength of such undue, one-sided emphasis, the world as manifold is viewed as a real transformation (परिणामः) of Brahman. It is through sheer loss of perspective and an unsteady grip on the negative 'moment' of the dialectic of Vedānta, that such a view originates and masquerades as the authentic representation of Śaṅkara-Vedānta. It cannot be condoned as a question of emphasis merely, but is a fundamental misrepresentation of the drift of Śaṅkara-Vedānta. *A propos* of this faulty perspective, the warning given by Sarvajñātmamuni in the *Śaṅkshēpa-Sārīrakam* is useful in the matter of a correct reading of the whole situation in Śaṅkara-Vedānta. He says (Chap. II, verse 61) that the concept of *Vivarta* logically presupposes that of *Parīṇāma*, but it is in the notion of *Vivarta* that the position of *Parīṇāma* finds its natural completion and ultimate explanation. If the Absolute Reality differs from the world as Manifold and Appearance by the whole diameter of being, and is characterised mainly through its contrast-effect thereto, the reality of the latter must be affirmed in the interest of the reality of the latter. This is, as Royce also observes, the perennial paradox of Mysticism.

(ii) *Dialectic of Relation.*

The result, which our analysis has yielded so far is the notion of one undifferentenced, eternal, self-manifest Experience or Consciousness as the Real. This is the very essence of Self (आत्मा) and identical therewith. It is not an attribute (धर्मः) of the Self as Substance (धर्मो) ; for this relation of Substance and Attribute imports difference (भेदः), howsoever refined, and sublimated it might be, and 'difference' as a category has already been rejected as illogical. Now Śaṅkara proposes to show that 'Relation' itself is a self-contradictory concept.

It is in connection with his controversy with the Naiyāyikas over the nature of causation, that Śaṅkara challenges the Naiyāyika contention that 'the cause and the effect are inseparable because of *samavāyah* (समवायः) and not identical' on the score of unintelligibility of the problem of Inherence or *samavāya*. As Śaṅkara puts it, "thus even the relation (of inherence) itself being *ex hypothesi* absolutely different from the terms related would relate itself to the terms through the mediation of another relation of the type of inherence on account of an absolute difference (of the same kind between the two), and, then, for that relation, another relation is to be premised and thus there would ensue an infinite regress.<sup>1</sup> This has a remarkable affinity with Bradley's way of dealing with relations. "In the first place" so argues Bradley, "a relation without terms seems mere verbiage ; and terms appear, therefore, to be something beyond their relation..... But how the relation can stand to the qualities is, on the other side, unintelligible. If it is nothing to the qualities, then they are not related at all..... But if it is to be something to them, then clearly we now shall require a *new* connecting relation..... And being something itself, if it does not itself bear a relation to the terms, in what intelligible way will it succeed in being anything to them? But here again we are hurried off into the eddy of a hopeless process, since

1 एवं समवायोऽपि समवायिभ्योऽत्यन्तभिन्नः सन् समवायस्य च योगान्तेनैव स्ववर्धनं समवायिभिः स्वमध्येतात्यन्तभेदसाम्यात् ततश्च तस्य तस्यान्तोऽन्यः स्ववन्धः कल्पयितव्यः इत्यनवस्थेव प्रसज्येत । —Com. on V.S. II. 1. xiv.

we are forced to go on finding new relations without end.”<sup>1</sup> Bradley, however, rounds off the discussion, in the manner of Śaṅkara in a similar context, with the concluding remark that the ‘problem is insoluble’ and ‘that a relational way of thought—any one that moves by the machinery of terms and relations—must appearance, and not truth.’

It is interesting to follow up the tenour of this dialectic of Relation as it has been brought to bear in the *Hastāmālaka-bhāṣya* on the question of the relation of *Caitanyam* (चैतन्य) to *Ātman* (आत्मन्). The relation in question may be either one of difference or identity, or even one of identity-in-difference (i.e. both different and non-different) (तथाहिचैतन्यात्मानो भिन्नमभिन्नं वा भिन्नाभिन्नं वा इति). It cannot be, for aught we know, the first (i.e. one of difference) ; for, in that case, no relation of Substance and Attribute is admissible between them, as, between the ‘Self’ and the ‘jar’ (भिन्नत्वेचात्मघटादिवत् धर्मधर्मित्वानुपपत्तेः). If it be urged that the analogy of the ‘Self’ and the ‘jar’ is not quite to the point for, as essentially unrelated, there is the *prima facie* impossibility of the ‘jar’ being an attribute of the Self, while *Caitanyam* being in more intimate relation with *Ātman* may fitlier be styled an attribute of Self, Śaṅkara would reply that such a relation itself is inadmissible, for a relation (being granted) must either be a relation of (external) conjunction or combination (संयोगः) or a relation of (internal) inherence (समवायः) *a tertium quid* or any other relation being (in this case) impossible. Now, it cannot be a relation of conjunction, for it is evidently a property of (corporeal) substances and *Caitanyam* is *not* a substance (संयोगस्य द्रव्यधर्मत्वात् अद्रव्यत्वाच्चैतन्यास्य न तत्संयोगः). Nor can it be one of inherence, for it involves *regressus ad infinitum* (अनवस्थापातात्) to the following effect: Is the relation of inherence (in question) related or unrelated to the terms in relations? Not surely unrelated, for it will, in that case, be indifferent, like jars, to the terms related ; if related, another relation of inherence is to be posited (a relation of conjunction etc. being out of the

question), and this, in dependence on another again, will lead to an infinite regress. Thus in all cases of difference, whatever it be, the relation of Substance and Attribute, is in no wise defensible (यत् किञ्चिदेतत् तस्माद्भिन्नत्वपक्षे धर्मधर्मिभावः सर्वथा नोपपद्यते). In case of a relation of identity (which is the second alternative), consciousness is of the very essence of Self, and so the relation of Substance and Attribute becomes all the more inconceivable according to the principle that a thing can never be an attribute of itself—'whiteness' surely is never an attribute of 'whiteness.' Thus remains (as the last alternative) the case of identity-in-difference (भिन्नाभिन्नपक्षः). It is, however, a manifest contradiction to hold at the same time and, in the same relation, that a thing is both identical with, and different from another. If it be maintained in this regard that identity-in-difference is not self-contradictory as being sanctioned by perception (which is a valid source of knowledge) as, for example, in the apprehension 'this is a cow,' the 'cowness' which is perceived as identical with this individual (cow) is recognised (प्रत्यभिज्ञायमानत्वात्) in the case of another individual (cow) as distinguished from the first, and thus from the fact of identity and difference figuring in perception, the controversy can be set at rest, the Advaitist discredits the suggestion on the ground that perception in such a case is susceptible of a different psychological explanation (प्रत्यक्षस्यानायासिद्धत्वात्), as, for example, things although different may yet appear as non-different or homogeneous in perception on account of such defects as extreme nearness etc., just as the successive flames of a lamp, though discrete, yet somehow appear as one continuous mass or as in one Moon there is the appearance of two ; hence it is concluded that perception which is capable of being otherwise explained can not invalidate the proved contradiction of 'identity-in-difference' (i.e. difference and non-difference) (प्रत्यक्षस्यानायासिद्धत्वात् न तेन प्रमायसिद्धस्य भेदानेदविरोधस्य प्रतिषेधो युक्तः ।). Then the author of *Hastāmālakabhūṣhyam* proceeds to the two-fold distinction of *Caitanyam* into its transcendental and phenomenal aspects (आत्मस्वरूपताचेतनस्वरूपता चेति) and pursues with relentless vigour the same dialectic of relation in its three-fold aspect down to its minutest ramification. The

polemic, however, is wound up with the secure establishment of one of the central tēnets of Śaṅkara-Vedānta viz., that, therefore, the Ātman is on no account to be termed a (transcendental) Substance with Consciousness as its attribute but the very essence of Consciousness itself (तन्मात्रात्मा सर्वथा चिद्वत् क्वलिर्हि चित्सवरूप एवेति). Here, in the enunciation of the problem of Transcendental Substance *versus* Transcendental Subject we have the moot-point of controversy between Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara. It will be beside the point to refer here to the conception of Soul-substance as it has figured in the West from Plato down the course of the ages to Wündt, Avenarius and Mach, not to mention others of a more recent date.

Among the varied applications of this dialectic of Relation, the next in importance from the standpoint of Advaita-Vedānta is that pressed against the Naiyāyika admission of *Jāti* (जाति) as an abstract, denotational, universal and incidentally against "the Whole-and-part" relation. According to the Naiyāyikas, things of the nature of compounds abide in atoms as their constituent causes by means of *samavāya* or the relation of inherence. Now, assuming the validity of the relation, it may still be asked, according to Śaṅkara, whether a compound abides in all the atoms taken together or in each separately. If the former, as all the atoms cannot possibly be perceived, the world as an aggregate of things would remain unperceived. But it may be urged that a whole is apprehended even if some only of its constituent parts be apprehended. Śaṅkara repudiates the suggestion with an emphatic disclaimer, and asserts that the one inherent in the many can be apprehended only if the many substances in which the one inheres are apprehended. The opponent, however, re-affirms his position and says that the whole does abide directly in *some* parts and through the meditation of these in *all* the parts. Śaṅkara would not concede even so much ; for, in his opinion, the whole, in order that it may abide in some parts, must presuppose other intervening parts and for these again other such parts, and so on to infinity. Śaṅkara's treatment, it is to be noted parenthetically, is somewhat similar to Bradley's way of dealing with the



spatial relation of the 'whole' and the 'part.' Enlarging on the contradiction inherent in space Bradley proceeds to set forth the antithesis thus :

(1) "Space is not a mere relation. For any space must consist of extended parts, and these parts clearly are spaces. . . . Again, from the other side, if any space is taken as a whole, it is evidently more than a relation. . . . The mere fact that we are driven always to speak of its *parts* should be evidence enough, what could be the *parts* of a relation ?

(2) But space is nothing but a relation. For, in the first place, any space must consist of parts ; and if the parts are not spaces, the whole is not space. Take then in a space any parts. These, it is assumed, must be solid, but they are obviously extended. If extended, however, they will themselves consist of parts, and these again of further parts, and so on without end. . . . We have seen that space vanishes internally into relations between units which never can exist. But on the other side, when taken by itself as an unit, it passes away into the search for an illusory whole. It is essentially the reference of itself to something else, a process of endless passing beyond actuality. As a whole it is, briefly, the relation of itself to a non-existent other."<sup>1</sup> Now, to proceed with the second alternative (offered by the Naiyāyika) viz. that the whole abides in the parts separately which being true, the same whole, Śaṅkara urges, can not be present independently in each of its several parts as the same Devadatta cannot simultaneously be present in two different places. What we should get, then in the end, is not a single whole but a number of different wholes. The opponent would still argue that the whole might conceivably be present in each part, full and entire, even as 'cowness' (गोत्व) in all cows. This, Śaṅkara asserts, is never borne out by our experience. Generic characters (such as 'structure,' 'dewlap' as in the case of bulls) may indeed be visibly present in all the individual members of the class, but a (physical) whole can not similarly be immanent

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<sup>1</sup> *Appearance and Reality*, pp. 36-7.

in all its constituent members. If that were so, the horn of a cow would give us milk. There is a world of difference, which the *Naiyāyika* forgets conveniently, between the category of the whole and the part viewed logically, and the same viewed physically. It is only the Absolute of the Hegelian type, and that too, according to the opinion of a limited section of Hegelians, which can thus appear in its constituent members, whole and entire without surrendering in the least its integrity.

It is well worth noting here that the Śaṅkara-Vedānta although it stands committed, by its rejection of the relation of inherence, to the repudiation of *Naiyāyika Jāti* (जातिः), does yet retain the realistic *Jāti* or universal, in a modified form. The Vedānta rejects the *Naiyāyika Jāti*, which has been defined as an eternal reality inhering in the *vyaktis* (व्यक्तिः) and being co-ordinate therewith ('नित्यत्वे सति अनेकसमवेतत्वम्') so as to convert it in the end into the abstract denotational universal of those Realists who subscribe to the motto: *universalia ante rem*. To quote *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*'s phrasing of this denunciation: <sup>1</sup> "There is absolutely no warrant for all these technical terms like *Jāti* and *Uṣādhi*, they being beyond the ken of all the accredited sources of valid knowledge." (जातिलोपाधिलपरिभाषायाः सकलप्रमाणागोचरत्वेन अप्रामाणिकत्वात्). But the Vedānta construes the realistic *Jāti* in a modified Aristotelian sense, as 'the connotational real,' not as co-ordinate with, and distinct from the individual (व्यक्तिः), but identical therewith. *Universalia in rebus* or immanent realistic *Jāti* is what the Vedānta would sanction and recognise. The *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* presents this distinction with a pointed emphasis in one sentence thus: "Percepts, such as 'this is a jar' etc., attest the reality of 'jariness' etc. but not also (the reality of 'jariness' etc.) as abstract universals." (घटोऽयम् इत्यादि प्रत्यक्षं हि घटत्वादिसद्भावे मानम् न तु तस्य जातित्वं ऽपि ।) That is why the *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, in perfect keeping with its ontological position, asserts that it is the *Jāti*, and not the *vyakti*, that is the locus of *śaktiḥ* (शक्तिः or शक्यत्वं) i.e. the capacity of a word to refer to or mean an object directly.

The object directly meant is, technically speaking, the *Sakyam* (शक्य); and to adopt the terminology of modern logic, the *Sakyam* of a word is its universal concept. Now, according to the *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, the power inheres in the *Jāti* and not the individuals (composing the class to which the word extends) because of the infinity of individuals and the consequent extravagance (in the assumption of an infinity of such 'power') (तत्र जातेरेव न व्यक्तेः। व्यक्तोनामानन्येन युक्तत्वात्). The Naiyāyika, however, would go the whole hog and say that the *śaktiḥ* in question may very well reside in the individuals characterised by generic qualities, form etc. (शक्तिर्जात्याकृतविशिष्टव्यक्तौ विश्राम्यति). To the question: "How is it, then, that we come to mean individual objects from such words as 'cow' etc.?" the Vedantist give a forceful reply: 'The *Jāti* is known in and through the same act of consciousness as the individual' (जातेर्व्यक्तिसमान-चिद्विद्वेद्यत्वात् इति); not because of any law of Association, as the psychologist of the mid-Victorian Associationist School would say, for the fact of association itself remains in that hypothesis unaccounted for, but because of the Ontological truth of the immanence of the Universal in the individual, of the identity of the *Dharmin* and the *Dharma* (अर्थव्यक्तिचोरमेदः).

Now, the cosmic sweep of the Dialectic of Relation—comprising, as it does, all the different kinds of relation including that of the knower and the known to which the arguments against relation necessarily apply, need not make us marvel, for it converges on the same result achieved by the Dialectic of *bheda* from the other side. But, as against the *modus operandi* of Śaṅkara in this regard, may not the Naiyāyika, with the characteristic naïveté of a realist, exclaim as William James did in a similar context: 'Relations relate in spite of Mr. Bradley'? Is it not a purely gratuitous assumption that a relation must presuppose another relation to relate itself to the terms in relation? A relation, it will be urged, simply because it is a relation requires no other. The alleged dialectical difficulties are only self-created, as they spring from a radical misconception regarding the nature of relation—namely, the treatment of relation as a *tertium quid* co-ordinate and homo-

geneous with the terms related. Śaṅkara, however, would stick to his position, and re-assert in the face of this realistic argument that the Naiyāyika can not hereby claim to have proved his case. He being a Pluralist by profession, must needs begin with the discrete and independent particulars of experience, and as he proceeds to justify the relations as subsisting in between them, they must ever be found to be foreign and external to the nature of these particulars. Thus, he cannot help postulating other relations and, therefore, slipping into the vicious *regressus ad infinitum*.

In criticism it may be urged, however, that Śaṅkara's polemic is valid only against Pluralism according to which all relations are necessarily external. But does it, it may be pertinently asked, apply with equal force against a system of Absolute Idealism in which there is recognition of internal relation, or better, self-relation on the part of the Absolute? Śaṅkara leaves us unconvinced here. Indeed, the main point here is not how A came into relation with B, but how A B started into existence at all. Difficulties arise equally in the case of Śaṅkara's monism as they did in the case of the pluralistic Nyāya. It is incumbent on Śaṅkara to show how any thing, on his hypothesis, comes to exist at all, no matter whether it is a homogeneous or undifferentenced principle, or an identity-in-difference of distinguishable but inseparable members. Śaṅkara seems to have cut the Gordian knot of relation without being able to unite it, and here at least Rāmānuja's stricture that the testimony of experience is not on the side of Śaṅkara's undifferentenced, irrelative Reality has a plausibility all its own.

This is, as the critic of Śaṅkara-Vedānta will triumphantly point out, the plague-spot or crying curse of every system of abstract monism ; this is that vicious logic which heads straight into an Acosmism or Pantheism, pure and simple. Indeed, the repudiation of inherence as a relation which logically imports the *abhedaḥ* (अभेदः) or non-difference of *Dharmaḥ* and *Dharmī*, *Jāti* and *Vyakti*, *Kāryyam* and *Kāraṇam*, is perilously near a system of rigid Pantheism or Acosmism of the Parmenidean type. So vital issues are staked upon a right construction of

this concept of *abhedaḥ* (अभेदः) which is not, as it has been generally supposed to be, the logic of Pantheism. The true logical significance of the concept of *Abhedaḥ* (अभेदः), *Ananytvam* (अनन्यत्वम्) or *Tādātmyam* (तादात्म्यम्) is hardly conveyed by the word 'identity' which has consequently been the prolific source of misconstructions heaped on Śaṅkara or Bradley. Let Bradley speak for himself. "Where there is no diversity there is no identity at all, the identity in abstraction from the diversity having lost its character." Again, "there is no sameness of mere existence, for mere existence is a vicious abstraction. And everywhere identity is ideal and consists in the transcendence of its own being by that which is identical."<sup>1</sup> Passages may be quoted from Śaṅkara's commentary to show that the concept of *abhedaḥ* or *ananytvam* as expressing the relation of cause and effect is not one of abstract, colourless identity—"identity in abstraction from diversity." It means simply what it directly stands for viz. 'non-different' i.e. the 'effect' is not different from 'the cause' (in respect of its essence). A paraphrasing of 'non-different' as 'identical'—an apparently innocuous procedure—is the 'original sin' in the matter of interpreting Śaṅkara's texts. In the first place, Śaṅkara clearly states in his commentary on Brahmasūtras II. 1. vi. "On the hypothesis of absolute sameness, moreover, the cause-effect relation itself is destroyed." (अन्यत्वासाध्यं च प्रकृतिविकारभाव एव प्रतीयते). Next he proceeds to allay all misunderstandings bearing on this topic by his express repudiation of the suggested 'identity': (The term has been used), not with a view to their identity, but with a view to the denial of a reality (on the part of the effect) other than that of the cause (कारणात् पृथक्सत्ताशून्यात् साध्यते न ऐक्याभिप्रायेण). That is why Śaṅkara's system goes by the name of '*Advaitavādaḥ*' (अद्वैतवादः) i.e. non-dualism<sup>2</sup> and not '*Aikyavādaḥ*' (ऐक्यवादः) i.e. a system of abstract or absolute monism. The *Vedāntapari-bhāṣhā* in the context of the logic of Perception substantiates

1 *Appearance and Reality*, Appendix, 'Identity.'

2 Cf. Edmond Holmes, 'A Defence of Pantheism' in the *Hibbert Journal*, April 1926.

this point further by the usage of the term ('अभेदः') in the true sense: " 'the non-difference from the knower' verily is not (tantamount to) their virtual identity, but the denial (on the part of the object) of a reality other than that of the knower." (प्रमादभेदो नाम न तावदेकः, किन्तु प्रमादसत्तातिरिक्तसत्ताकत्वभावः). In the face of such outspoken utterances, the perverse interpretation of 'abhedah' as 'identity' betrays a lamentable ignorance of the contextual criticisms that are to be found in the literature of the Sāṃkhya-Vedānta School. Vācaspati Miśra, who is regarded by common consent as a notable exponent of Sāṃkhya-Vedānta, pursues the tenour of the master's logic to the following effect: "Neither are the earthen vessels different, nor non-different, nor even, both different and non-different from earth, but are in reality, indescribable or indefinable" (न च सदः शरावादयो भिद्यन्ते, न चाभिन्नाः, न वा भिन्ना, भिन्नाः किन्तु निर्वचनीया एव). This trend of thought was taken up in right earnest and developed in a negative direction by Śrīharsha, another renowned protagonist of this school, so that he ended by metamorphosing the *Advaitavādaḥ* (अद्वैतवादः) of Sāṃkhya into a Philosophy of the Indefinable or *Anirvācyavādaḥ* (अनिर्वच्यवादः). This he achieved by assigning central importance in his system to the notion of individuality (स्वरूपं or तत्त्वं) of a thing which always eludes the grasp of universals. No universal or even system of universals can possibly exhaust the infinite variety of the individual, and to recognise this inaccessibility of the individual is, in Śrīharsha's opinion, the deeper philosophical significance of that recondite principle of *Māyā* which is *sadasadbhyāmanirvacanīyā* (सदसदभ्यामनिर्वचनीया). That this was the true drift of Sāṃkhya's doctrine of *Māyā* as indefinable, Śrīharsha does not for a moment call into question. True it is that Sāṃkhya does in some places speak of the 'individual' and 'individuality', as for example in course of his commentary on the Taittiriya vii. 8. (ब्रह्मानन्दवह्नी, अदमोऽनुवाकः) : "Verily that is the essential nature or individuality (of a being) which is not dependent on anything else. Whatever is dependent on anything else is not its individuality—for that being absent, this (so-called) individuality will be gone" (यदि यस्य नाप्यपेक्षस्वरूपं, तत्त्वस्य तत्त्वम्; यदप्यपेक्षं, न तत्त्वं;

सनामावे अभावात् ), and dwells at length on the distinction between 'individuality' or 'essential nature' (स्वरूपं) and 'accidental, derivative or adjectival nature' (सम्बन्धिरूपं) of a thing. But he has never brought the idea into prominent relief. What Śrīharsha's dialectic has taught us—no matter whether we agree with all his findings or not—is that we are not to be dismayed at the revelation of the nature of things as the home of countless contradictions. Our logic must be attuned to the nature of things and not the things stretched on the Procrustean bed of our abstract formal logic or metaphysical predilections. Saṃkara rightly observes that 'the union of contradictories is not denied of phenomenal objects, it is denied only of the noumenon, the simple, eternal object.'<sup>1</sup> It is in the light of such a methodological principle that one can best hope to appraise the full significance of the relation of *abhedah* or *ananyatvam* as distinguished from *aikyam* (ऐक्यं). "In identity of contradictories, the identity is known through recognition ; the relation of identity is nothing but the identical thing."<sup>2</sup>

The concept of *ananyatvam* comes into clearer relief in the context of the Vedāntic doctrine of Causation (to which it strictly applies as its peculiar category), nevertheless it is, as Deussen truly remarks, not only the law that determines the relation between events and changes of phenomena, but is also the bond between substance and attributes. Although it may appear as an advance labelling, such a doctrine is the inevitable outcome of an immanent view of causation.

1 नित्यनिरवयववस्तुविषयं हि विरुद्धत्वमवोचाम हेताहेतव्यं, न कार्यविषये सावयवे—  
*Brhadāranyaka Upanishad Bhāṣyam*, Ch. V. 1st Brāhmaṇa.

2 Prof. K. C. Bhattācāryya, *Studies in Vedantism*, p. 25.

## LECTURE VII.

### BRAHMAN AND MĀYĀ: THE METAPHYSICS OF THE VEDĀNTA.

The devastating sweep of the dialectic of 'experience' and 'relation,' which involved in one common ruin the whole world of manifold existence may, indeed, stupefy and even scare away the metaphysical enquirer, but it cannot forever silence or stifle the metaphysical craving of the soul. Accordingly, we have in Śaṅkara-Vedānta a frank recognition of duality or multiplicity, and an honest attempt to render its philosophical status and importance. The prevailing attitude of the philosopher of the Śaṅkara-Vedānta School in this regard is that the world *somehow* exists, and its relation to Brahman as its infinite and unconditioned ground is simply indefinable (अनिर्वचनीयं). *Māyā* is the term which is exactly descriptive of this attitude. It is true that the description of the manifold world as *Māyā* has been regarded by critics as an evasion of explanation, and no explanation at all in the strict sense of the term. But admitting *sub judice* its claim to figure as a philosophical principle, one has yet to explain how far Brahman as invested with *Māyā* may be regarded as the cause or ground of this multiform existence. The best way to proceed would be along the Vedāntic dialectic of causation which has been worked out by Śaṅkara in his classic refutation of the different theories of causation in the *Tarkaṣādhāḥ* (तर्कषादः) of the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*. He begins with his critique on the Buddhistic theory of Asatkāraṇavāda (as outlined in his commentary on Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad), according to which effects arise out of the primitive Non-being or Void (शून्यं) by a process of negation of Negation (*i.e.* of the Void). But phenomena *quā* phenomena cannot reasonably be conceived as being projected out of non-being. On the contrary, it is a matter of common experience that effects come into being only when causes are present. Even on the supposition of 'nothing' as the cause of some



phenomenon, nothing becomes something, and no longer remains the Void or Non-being of the Buddhists. Against this the Buddhists maintain that the pot-form cannot come into being unless the lump-form of the clay is destroyed. Hence, logically speaking, the immediate unconditional antecedent *i.e.* the cause of the pot-form is not the clay but the destruction of the lump-form. To this it is replied that along with the destruction of the lump-form, the clay as material of the pot is not destroyed. All causes while operating destroy their quondam manifestation just to usher into existence the alleged effect-form (which is its present manifestation), in as much as the same cause cannot reasonably exist in two different forms at one and the same time. In the production of the pot the clay forsakes the lump-form and is in a state of passing over to the pot-form. But what about its character or status during the *ad interim* period? Should it be left absolutely characterless or amorphous—neither fish nor flesh—a creature of the imagination? A similar absurdity appertains to the theory transient causality which has to admit under pressure of arguments that a power emanating from A remains suspended, as it were, in vacuum—without any ostensible support or locus,—and then flows into B. Lotze has ably exposed the fallacy of such a procedure. Nor can it be argued with consistency, says Śaṅkara, that the clay of the moment is destroyed and the material of clay (in the production of the pot) is something different from, though similar to, the previously existing one in appearance. And it is this element of similarity which is the ground of our erroneously inferring the identity of the lump and the pot. But, urges Śaṅkara, we have here a clear perception of identity, and apart from this perception we cannot build our theory upon similarity which is a matter of inference only. Besides the consciousness ‘this is like that’ is possible if the same knower or self is witness to both the fleeting, momentary cognitions—which, however, is inconceivable from the Buddhistic standpoint. If it be asserted that the knowledge of identity may still be conceived, although the fact of identity may not exist, knowledge as implying correspondence of ideas to facts becomes in that case a nullity. Hence, Śaṅkara

winds up the controversy by saying that to maintain that effects arise out of the 'annihilation of the cause is denying roundly that they have a cause. According to the Vedāntist, however, the cause alone is real: whatever differs from it is unreal. Effectuation is only the self-alienation of the cause. The effect has, therefore, its 'truth' in the cause, and not *vice versa*.

The Naiyāyika doctrine of Causation known as *Ārambha-vādaḥ* or *Asatkāryavādaḥ* holds that the non-existent effect originates from the existing cause. The effect is thus real after, and unreal before, effectuation. This does not, however, amount to the Buddhistic negation of cause. Now, Śaṅkara points out in his criticism of the Naiyāyika position that the effect being non-existent before its production, it is not real and as such cannot be related to the cause. "Relation is possible of existents only, not of the existent and the non-existent or two non-existents."<sup>1</sup> The effect being thus unrelated to the cause, any effect would be at random produced by any cause, and this means an end to the determinate relation between cause and effect (कार्यकारणव्यवस्था) in our experience of the world. Indeed, what we set store by in the cause-and-effect relation is the conception of Order underlying it, and along with the temporal and the spatial order, these three orders of Relation (देशकालनिमित्तसम्बन्धः) are generally considered as constitutive of the cosmic order. Hence the Naiyāyika formulation of the doctrine of causality which seems apparently to have belittled this ultimate postulate of our experience of the world, tends to inaugurate chaos and confusion (संक्षयः) in a sphere where law and order are immediately in evidence. The shaft seems to have gone home, and the Naiyāyika seeks to avert this impending disaster in the eventual overthrow of the cause-and-effect relation by the hypothesis of an *Atiśayaḥ* (अतिशयः) or surplus (energy) flowing from the causal substance into the effect-form. This is that famous admission of *Saktiḥ* (शक्तिः) in its varied application in the Nyāya system which, in its detailed working

1 सुतोर्हि सम्बन्धः सम्भवति । न सदसतोः असतोर्वा—Com. on V.S. II. 1. xviii.

out, affords an instructive comparison with the Cartesian conception of the cause containing the effect *formaliter* or *eminenter*. To this Śaṅkara demurs on the following counts: if this *atiśayaḥ* or surplus be the antecedent condition (of being or non-being) of the effect in the cause, then the Naiyāyika's procedure is suicidal; if, however, it be anything else, it can either be (i) non-existent in which case it would not produce anything, far less the specific effect in question, or (ii) different from the cause-phenomenon, in which case the effect-phenomenon cannot result from the cause-phenomenon, or, lastly, (iii) different from the effect in which case, there is no reason why it should produce this particular effect and no other. None of these alternatives being logically tenable, the hypothesis of *śaktiḥ* as a separate entity is negatived, and Śaṅkara puts forward his own conclusion that the alleged *Śaktiḥ* is identical with the causal substance on the one hand and the effect-phenomenon pertains on the other to the very essence of *Śaktiḥ* (कारणस्यात्मभूता शक्तिः शक्तेश्चात्मभूतं कार्यम्<sup>१</sup>) and thus is established the non-difference (अनन्वयत्वं) of the effect from the cause (कारणात् प्रयुक्-सत्ताशून्यत्वं साध्यते). Then Śaṅkara proceeds to defend his thesis as to the eternity of effect (in the empirical sense) as against the Naiyāyika view of the prior non-existence of the effect in the cause. The effect-form is neither unreal (असत्) nor imaginary nor does it accidentally emerge into existence. The *Asat*, strictly speaking, cannot appear, for, whatever appears must be supposed to be existing prior to its manifestation, though lying concealed from us. As an object hidden in darkness or concealed by a non-transparent wall, manifests itself under more favourable conditions—when the obstruction to their manifestation is removed, so is the pot-form hidden in the previous form of the clay, the lump-form, reveals itself under appropriate conditions. To this the Naiyāyika objects that something existing and yet not appearing or manifesting itself is inadmissible. Admitting, for argument's sake, the truth of the contention that "all that is manifested was previously existent," the contrapositive of the proposition *viz.*, "what was previously non-existent is not manifested" would lay claim to

validity *i.e.* absence of manifestation would require verification—which is absurd. Hence it is reasonable that a thing is existent only when it is manifested. Śaṅkara opposes this extravagant demand—that a thing is existent only when it is manifested—which amounts to saying that all existents are manifested and this is an obvious impossibility. As to the potential existence of the pot-form in the lump-form, if it be contended that the lump-form should in that case occupy a space-position different from that of the pot-form, just as the 'wall' (in the illustration) occupies a space-position different from that of the object hidden by it, Śaṅkara would question the validity of the objection on the ground that there is no law that the respective space-positions of that which conceals, and of that which is concealed should be different; for, to take an example, in milk the milk-form conceals from view the water-form and yet has the same space-position as the latter. To this parity of reasoning the Naiyāyika may yet object and say that the two cases are not exactly similar; for, to see the pot concealed in darkness, one has to exert oneself (in the direction of lighting a lamp etc.) but no such exertion is implied in seeing the pot emerge from the lump of clay. But Śaṅkara persists in maintaining that so far as seeing is concerned there is absolutely no difference between the two cases: seeing involves no exertion, which production alone does. Baffled in this direction the Naiyāyika falls back upon the argument from practical efficiency (अर्थक्रियाकारित्वं)—the infallible pragmatic patent—and argues with apparent cogency that a thing which is merely, but *does* nothing is a figment of imagination, an *entia rationis*, debarred from the world of real things. A cause justifies its claim thereto only by producing the effect. This, in Śaṅkara's opinion, amounts to saying that the origination of the pot is *ipso facto* the origination of the potter, both being reckoned co-effects of a common cause. Does not this fact of mutual dependence lead to the conception of both the so-called 'cause and effect' as modes of one and the same substance instead of strengthening the Naiyāyika hypothesis? The Naiyāyika, however, would regard it as no more than a mere

quibble and point out that the effect originates and acquires a positive nature *after* it has been previously endowed with the being of the cause, origination of an effect being in all cases regarded as the connection of the effect with the existence of the cause. But, replies Śaṅkara, connection can only be of things that are, not of things that are not, nor of things one of which is, and the other is not.<sup>1</sup> How can the (non-existent) effect, therefore, be connected with the (existent) cause? Further, we cannot intelligibly use the phrase 'before its origination' seeing that the concept of non-existence has no temporal limit. It is only what is, and not what is not, that can have a conceivable limit. The non-existent is absolutely non-existent—there being no degrees of non-existence. Thus non-plussed the Naiyāyika assumes the offensive, and provokes his opponent into giving a final and effective reply to his contention. If the effect be, as Śaṅkara contends, pre-existent in the cause, is not, argues the Naiyāyika, the activity of the causal agent (कारकव्यापारः) rendered superfluous or useless (अनर्थकः)? Śaṅkara, while summing up his position, embodies in his reply to this question all the corollaries that follow from the central theme. In the first place, he urges, the effect exists in the cause (before as well as after the production). If the effect be not granted an existence in the cause, the cause can, by no conceivable means, give birth to the effect. The effect should be supposed to exist in the form of potency which under more favourable conditions, would originate as a thing or event, effectuation being the manifestation of a cause in another form. Secondly, it is to be noted that this change of form does not, as it is generally supposed, entail an essential change in the causal substance. That Devadatta with contracted hands and feet (संकोचितहस्तपादः) is the same Devadatta with outstretched hands and feet (प्रसारितहस्तपादः) is proved by the fact of Recognition (प्रत्यभिज्ञानात्) which would be *prima facie* absurd in a doctrine of momentary existence (क्षणवादः) as that of the Buddhists. Then, again, if the effect be non-existent before production, the

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<sup>1</sup> सतीर्हि सम्बन्धः सम्भवति न सदस्यतोः असतीर्षी—Com. on V.S. II. 1, xviii.

supposed activity of the causal agent would be without an object whereon to exercise itself, like sword-thrusts on the surrounding atmosphere. Fourthly, it might be urged, that the past or future being, though different from the present being, is still *being*. No (future) object can be willed, unless the (future) object be existent; for willing (as distinguished from mere desiring or imagining) is simply the objectification of the future. If the so-called future being be really non-existent, the perception of the *Yogins* (who acquire certain abnormal powers such as clairvoyance etc.), known technically as *yogi-pratyaksham* (योगिप्रत्यक्षं) although uncommon (अलौकिकं), becomes impossible; for the *Yogin* is supposed to be perceiving the past and the future as we perceive the present. Following up this line of thought a little further, and abstracting from the limitations that characterise our perception, we come across the case of God's foreknowledge, which should strictly be called, knowledge of what is future to finite beings that are in time. Now, God's knowledge (or foreknowledge) would be unthinkable, if the future (object) were not eternally existent. Thus it is that Śaṅkara escapes between the horns of that standing dilemma of theology—if Divine foreknowledge be a fact, man's free will is a delusion—by employing the strictly metaphysical notion of Existence as participation in a Being that is essentially timeless. The solution here given by Śaṅkara of this problem of the reconciliation between Divine foreknowledge and human free will has nothing to do with the ingenious device of a 'self-imposed' limitation requisitioned for this purpose. It rather reminds one of the Augustinian or the Anselmic way of solving the dilemma. Again, what does, asks Śaṅkara, non-existence of the (future) pot mean? It means simply the non-existence of the non-existing (not of the existing) pot and as such it does not mean anything definitely. Non-existence (of the pot) *quā* non-existence has no distinguishable mark by which it may be distinguished from the non-existence of cloth, for example. Non-existence is therefore a notion which is strictly indefinable. Finally, in order that we may make an intelligible use of the proposition: "the effect comes into

being," the 'effect' as subject must be already existent in order to own 'comes into being' as predicate. The modern logician, however, would say that it need not necessarily be existent ; conceptual 'existence' or 'subsistence' may be sufficient for that purpose.

As against the Buddhist *Asatkāraṇavādin* as well as against the Naiyāyika *Asatkāryavādin* Śaṅkara wields the double-edged weapon of the eternity of the principle underlying the cause-and-effect relation *i.e.* the eternity of cause as well as the eternity of effect (in an empirical sense of course). This seems to be the contention of the *Śāṃkhya* theory of *Satkāryavādaḥ* which for that reason makes the nearest approach to the Vedāntic theory of causation. The *Śāṃkhya* theory is also known as *Pariṇāmavādaḥ* (परिणामवादः) ; for it believes in evolution with substantial mutation and holds effects to be the real transformations of the causes. The *Śāṃkhya* repudiates the Naiyāyika theory as preposterous so far as the latter subscribes to the monstrous hypothesis that the previously non-existent somehow acquires existence. What is non-existent is so absolutely and eternally ; you cannot at random make a thing change its nature, *e.g.* a jar change into a cloth. Even an admission of *Śaktiḥ* (शक्तिस्त्वोक्तः) will not achieve the miracle and thus escape from the *impasse*. The only plausible hypothesis is the supposition of the effect as potentially present in the cause and a collocation of circumstances is necessary to make the latent state patent in the form of the effect. There is no need, according to *Śāṃkhya*, of postulating a separate *Śaktiḥ* (शक्तिः) bringing about the desired effect : it is the promise, 'not-yet' state (अनागतवस्था) of the effect that has got the dynamic, the potency of the causal relation. The effect, from the *Śāṃkhya* point of view, may be viewed as the immanent finality, the *nisus formativus* realising itself through a series of real transformations till it reaches the very acme of development. Effectuation is not thus a falling away from, an attenuation or self-alienation of, the reality of the cause but a fuller realisation of the latter ; for the reality of the effect and the reality of the cause are not two different types of realities.

Rather it is the reality of the cause that appears in the effect, the effect being nothing but the cause redistributed or transmuted.

But this doctrine of causation as *Pariṇāmaḥ*, on closer inspection, will be found to be a distinct anticipation of the Vedāntic doctrine of causation as *Vivartaḥ* (विवर्तः). Evolution, change, transformation, development are categories which have only an immanent use, that is, have their exemplification within the strict limits of the finite or phenomenal, and as such are irrelevant in a wider context. They have only, as Kant taught us, empirical validity but transcendental ideality. (This topic has already been fully discussed and the discussions need not therefore be repeated here). Moreover, the Sāṃkhya theory of *Pariṇāmaḥ* is impaled on the horns of a dilemma: if it be maintained that the effect is a mere transformation of the cause, it is not a case of substantial mutation; if, again, it be spoken of as a case of substantial mutation, it cannot at the same breath be regarded as mere transformation of the cause, because such transformation does not connote the origination of anything new. Moreover, as the *Bhāmalī* points out: 'If transformation means complete or radical change in the nature of the cause, knowledge would be impossible, for it would make every succeeding state of existence different from the foregoing. If, however, transformation means change of a part of its being, it is to be asked further: is this part different from, or identical with, the entire being of the cause? If different it becomes a case of impossible synthesis; if identical, the complete being is changed and the effect becomes a completely different thing. These inherent dialectical difficulties led the Vedāntist to deny the integrity of the cause-and-effect relation. The effect is identical with the cause, though in appearance, different. From the empirical (व्यवहारिकः) point of view an effect may appear to be different (अन्यः) from the cause, but in an absolute or metaphysical (पारमार्थिकः) reference it is merely a *vivartaḥ* (विवर्तः) an appearance of the cause. This is the local significance of *ananytvam* as applied to the cause-effect relation. Rāmānuja seems to have entirely missed this point when he taxed the



Śaṅkarite conception with flagrant self-contradiction thus: "Those who assert the non-difference of the effect from the cause on the ground of the (alleged) unreality of the effect, cannot establish the non-difference of cause and effect, for there can consistently be no identity between the true and the false. If it (this non-difference) were true it would establish either the falsity of Brahman or the truth of the world."<sup>1</sup> What the Vedāntist is seeking to impress upon us is that the cause and the effect are identical in *being*, though different in *appearance*.

Thus the elaborate discussion on the nature of Causality lands Śaṅkara in a purely formalistic conception of the causal relation. If, as Descartes maintained, the effect is contained 'formally or eminently' in the cause or if the effect be, as Śaṅkara claims, of the very nature of the cause (कारणस्यात्म-भूतं कार्यं), Spinoza may be said to have drawn the logical conclusion from this position, and made causation a purely 'formal' affair, a matter of words merely (वाच्यारम्भश्च), as Śaṅkara himself admits. "The original cause, however, which, up to the last effect, appears in the form of this or that effect like an actor in all possible rôles"<sup>1</sup> keeps its real nature, verily as does a dramatic actor, concealed from view, inasmuch as there is more reality in the cause than in the effect or even the *ensemble* of effects taken collectively. That all the so-called effects are the modes of one primal substance is also established from the fact of reciprocal action among the phenomena of the empirical world. "Whatever stands" says Śaṅkara "in the relation of agent and patient or mutual interdependence is found to be conditioned by a common cause and pervaded by a community of nature.... This entire universe as well as (its constituent elements like) earth etc., illustrate this relation of mutual inter-

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1 ये तु कार्यकारणयोः अणुनालं कार्यमिच्छन्त्याशयेन वदन्ति, न तेषां कार्यकारण-योरनणुनालं सिध्यति, सत्यमिच्छाद्योरैकानुपपत्तिः । तथा सति ब्रह्मणो मिथ्यात्वं जनतः सत्यत्वं वा स्यात्—Sreebhāshyam.

1 तथा मूलकारणमेव सा-अन्त्यात् कार्यात् तेन तेन कार्याकारिण नटवत् व्यवहारा-स्यदत्तं प्रतिपद्यते—Com. on V.S. II. 1. xviii.

dependence.”<sup>1</sup> The generalisation contained in the latter part of the extract seems to be a maturer view of the causal relation as exhibited in the phenomena of the world. The same immanent dialectic which spurs us on from the category of causality (or causal dependence) to that of reciprocity (or reciprocal dependence), which is nothing but causality more adequately conceived, seems to have led Śaṅkara to this position. The argument embodied in the whole passage is substantially the same as that employed by Lotze in arguing from the fact of interaction according to law among the so-called independent facts of the world to the presence of one unitary principle (called M) as their immanent, underlying ground. To seek to know in detail the essential nature of this principle is an impossible demand set up by the finite mind. There must be left a residuum of mystery, a dark impenetrable background, to explore which is not within the reach of beings like ourselves.

Now, the concept of causality, as so far construed by the Vedāntist, is brought to bear on the relation of the world-appearance to its causal substance (उपादानं or अधिष्ठानं). The net result of the dialectic of causation is that Reality is of the nature of cause and the appearance is the effect in a phenomenal sense, while metaphysically viewed, it is non-different from the cause. But at the same time the Vedāntist admits that the effect, empirically viewed, is a baffling mystery. It can neither be said to be existing nor non-existing. It is something indefinable (अनिर्वचनीयं). Equally mysterious is the nature of the cause as gauged by means of its revelation in a system of appearances ; for the causal substance has an individuality of its own apart from its revelations, and this inner core of mystery is something at once inviting and resisting all scrutiny. Thus the dialectic of Causation leads up to the dialectic of Nescience or *Ajñānam* (अज्ञानं).

The analysis of the causal relation has once for all estab-

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<sup>1</sup> यच्च परस्परोपकारार्थोपकारकं तद्विकारचतुर्व्यक्तं एकसामानात्मिकञ्च. इष्टं..... परस्परोपकारार्थोपकारकभूतं इदं जगत् पृथिव्यादि—*Brhadāranyakabhāṣyam*.

lished the point that a lump of clay may be turned into a plate-form or jug-form, but the latter have no reality or being apart from that of the clay. It is by borrowing reality from the abiding reality of the clay that these diverse forms of 'jug' etc. masquerade before us as real entities, but they shine all the same with a reflected glory. Our experience, of all and sundry, will thus be found on analysis to be made up of two factors, the modes of *Ajñānam* (अज्ञान) and the real Being. Now, can this analysis be extended to the case of the relation between the world-appearance and the world-ground? Kant who had forbidden a transcendent use of the causal category does himself employ it in a transcendental reference, for herein the boundary of our cosmic experience is only touched and not overstepped. So we find some followers of Śaṅkara like Sarvajñātmanuni, Sureśvara, Prakāśānanda etc. calling Brahman the cause of the universe by implication in so far as it is the support of Nescience or *Māyā*, the principle of all becoming.

Now what is the specific nature of this Nescience? It has been defined as that which is beginningless and positive yet terminable by knowledge (अनादिभाववत्पक्षे सति ज्ञाननिवर्त्तितम्). Although it functions as a veiling agency of objects prior to their manifestation, in the determinate acts of knowledge that have origin in time, it itself as associated with pure consciousness is beginningless. Further, as regards its positive character (भाववत्पक्षे) it should be noted that it does not mean opposition to negation (*abhāvaḥ*) but connotes simply its difference therefrom (अभावविलक्षणमात्रं विवक्षितम्). It is not to be reckoned as a positive entity in the strict sense of the term; it is positive simply because it is not negative. It is a category neither positive nor negative as ordinarily understood, but a *tertium quid* different from both. Thus construed, an appellation is to be coined which will exactly convey the indefinite or indeterminate nature of the category. It is the term '*anirvacanīyam*' (अनिर्वचनीयं) which is just suited to the exigency of the case.

— But what is the voucher, the *raison d'être*, it may be

asked, of such a peculiar category of the *Anirvācanīya*, the Indefinite and the Indefinable, which is distinct from both the categories of the real and the unreal (सदसद्विशेषः)? The existence of such Nescience or *Ajñānam* is established, says the Vedāntist, by means of Perception and Inference. Such perceptions as 'I had slept a blissful sleep and thus known nothing' ('सुखमहम स्नाप्सम् नाहं किञ्चिदवेदिषम्') directly testify to the presence of an object having no definite characteristics whereby it can be classed either as positive or negative *i.e.*, they refer to the Indefinite in question. The objection that has been so frequently pressed against this hypothesis is that there can be no perception whatsoever during deep sleep and that the remembrance of the peaceful repose of such sleep on waking is not a case of *bona fide* recollection of a past perceived state, but a case of inference. What we know (here by inference) is not a presentation or consciousness of nothing determinate or particular, but only the absence of knowledge and of the perpetual wear and tear of the waking, and, to some extent, of the dreaming state as well, in dreamless sleep (सुषुप्तिः). Thus, on waking, we have the memory of the state before we retired to sleep and have perception of the state of freshness after the sleep—by comparing which we *infer* the absence of knowledge and other attendant distractions of the Self during the *ad interim* period of deep sleep. Śaṅkara takes exception to this explanation as being illegitimate and illogical. The fact of remembrance unmistakably proves the direct experience or perception of such a repose by the self during dreamless sleep; for memory can be only of a past perception. In a case like this which is unique of its kind, and the exemplar of itself, inference is *prima facie* impossible; for, all inference is possible only on the basis of observed facts or percepts, and thus we can infer nothing the like of which was never presented in our experience. But, then, it might again be argued that the absence of all determinate knowledge during deep sleep being after all a negative concept cannot be presented but is to be inferred. To this Śaṅkara replies that you cannot infer the 'absence' in question unless you can conceive it, and to be able

to conceive you must have a prior perception thereof. Thus the absence of knowledge cannot be referred to or even mentioned excepting so far as there is a direct perception of it during such absence. There is during deep sleep, a mental state of the form of the Indefinite, and it is the impression (संस्कारः) or rather the revival of that mental state of *ajñānam* (surviving in the form of *saṃskāraḥ* or 'disposition') that makes possible the remembrance of peaceful repose during sleep. The Indefinite or Nescience perceived in consciousness, it is further to be noted, is more fundamental and general than the mere absence of knowledge (ज्ञानाभावः). It is this latter that is inferred from the former.

This Indefinite Nescience (*Ajñānam*) is, again, a matter of inference. It is from such everyday experiences of ours as 'I did not know it before, but know it now,' that we *infer* the presence of *Ajñānam* as a veiling agency which retires before the incipient knowledge of an object. Further, the fact of its existence is inferred from the impeded manifestation of the illimitable bliss of Brahman as *Ānandaṃ* (आनन्दं). If there were no *Ajñānam* to hinder its manifestation, it would have shone forth in its full-orbed glory. Moreover, the existence of this Nescience as a positive content follows from its being the substance of illusion, all and sundry. There are, strictly speaking, only two categories in *Śaṅkara-Vedānta*: the category of the Real, the Self-manifest Brahman, and the category of the Indefinite, the Nescience or *Ajñānam* that veils the nature of Brahman as well as projects an appearance of the world as manifold. Brahman cannot conceivably figure as the substance (विविधानं) of illusion, it being eternally unchangeable (कूटस्थमित्यर्थः); it is, therefore, the other category of the Indefinite or Nescience which answers to this need. This Nescience, however, is manifested by the witnessing intelligence or consciousness (साक्षिचेतनम्), not by the pure, undifferentiated (सुद्धचेतनम्), the *sākshicaitanyam* being nothing but *śuddhacaitanyam* reflected in the states of *Avidyā*. Thus the *Sākshicaitanyam* can comprehend both *ajñānam* and *jñānam* or knowledge of things,

and there is no contradiction (विरोधत्वम्) in a category which is *ex hypothesi* indefinable.

Now, following up the constructive, converging lines of reflection in Śaṅkara's dialectic which is mainly negative in character, we come by the solid bed-rock for further metaphysical construction in the 'truth' of the causal relation, pervading the empirical world—the non-difference (अनन्वयत्वम्) between the world of becoming and its infinite ground. While maintaining with a Spinozistic emphasis the ultimate identity of *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*, Śaṅkara has gone to the very root of the matter and made his position secure for all time by showing the logical untenability of the category of Relation itself. Thus the standing problem of philosophy—the relation of the finite to the Infinite—does not arise for Śaṅkara at all. The situation is further reinforced by a resolute carrying out of the Dialectic of Causation which unequivocally denies the metaphysical reality and independence of the effect as distinct from the cause. This does not, however, amount to a denial of the empirical reality of the finite world of things as an appearance of Reality. It is, in other words, *Māyā* (माया). Here it is, as critics of Śaṅkara will probably urge, that the dialectic is strained to its breaking-point, and the situation is saved only by an appeal to the doctrine of *Māyā* which is but a surrender to a cheap, agnostic scepticism of the *ignoramus et ignorabimus* type. A criticism of this sort has, we admit, some amount of plausibility; but we should do well to remember as William James remarked in another reference, that 'the native absolutism of our intellect deserves to be snubbed and kept in check' in its effort to encompass the mystery of existence. A confession of 'ultimate doubts' is not always the unmistakable symptom of intellectual indolence on the part of a philosophical inquirer or index of a premature compromise with the forces of ignorance he was commissioned to conquer. On the contrary it bespeaks intellectual honesty—a candid confession that philosophy cannot justify its own apotheosis. Agnosticism may be bad, or a pitfall for philosophy, but a cheap and overweening gnosticism that presumes to

chase away all mystery from the universe is worse still, and foredoomed to failure in the task to which it stands pledged. If Śaṅkara has erred at all here, he has done so in good company ;“for, Bradley (whose name is assuredly one to reckon with in Contemporary British Philosophy) with due regard ‘for the exercise of doubt and wonder’ offers his *apologia* thus : “We admit the healthy scepticism for which all knowledge in a sense is vanity, which feels in its heart that science is a poor thing if measured by the wealth of the real universe. We justify the natural wonder which delights to stray beyond our, daylight world, and to follow paths that lead into half-known half-unknowable regions. Our conclusion, in brief, has explained and has confirmed the irresistible impression that all is beyond us.”<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, what Śaṅkara means in this regard and seeks to convey by the term ‘Māyā’—which has been unfortunately found in practice to be more frequently criticised than understood—can be best realised in the light of the Bradleyan doctrine of ‘the ideality of the finite’ and the suggestive term ‘Appearance’ to which he has given a peculiar prominence and currency. In his rendering of “the two-fold meaning of the word ‘appearance’ ” “that sense of the term in which something appears to some one” “is secondary” while “what is fundamental is the presence in everything finite of that which takes it beyond itself.”<sup>2</sup>

Śaṅkara starts, as we have already seen, not from the ‘One above,’ but from the fact of the appearance of Brahman as the world, from the concrete *Welt-anschauung*, from the world as manifold (अनन्तप्रपञ्चः). The question as to how or why the One or Brahman becomes many or the world is an illegitimate one (अतिप्रश्नः) according to Śaṅkara. The hypothesis of ‘Māyā’ is invoked just to indicate the ultimate and therefore inexplicable nature of this Fact. The mere inability to explain the ‘how’ or the ‘why’ of it is no argument against its admission in

<sup>1</sup> *Appearance and Reality*, 2nd Ed., p. 549.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 272.

philosophy. The word 'Māyā' registers the inadequacy and limitation of all system of explanations, causal or otherwise. Śaṅkara would, therefore, heartily endorse Bradley's proposition that "the Absolute really appears, but the conditions of its appearance are not known."<sup>1</sup> The cryptic utterances 'I am' and 'I am that I am' express, with as much accuracy as force, just this standing riddle, the inexplicable enigma and baffling mystery of the world-appearance which Śaṅkara has in view. Now, admitting this to be a fact, what Śaṅkara, in strict fidelity to his monistic persuasions, is concerned to maintain is the falsity of such appearance—to maintain the integrity and identity of Being by the negation of such appearance. The alleged fact is thus found to fall short of the truth. Nevertheless this fact of appearance is neither ignored nor left unaccounted for. Of the two possible modes of explanation, Śaṅkara stoutly refused with a Kantian emphasis to make an extravagant, and therefore, illegitimate use of the concept of evolution or development (परिणमवादः), as has so often been employed to set forth the relation between the world as a whole and its transcendent ground, and what he accepted instead as the only plausible hypothesis was that of illusory appearance or perversion (विवर्तवादः) of Brahman as the world of multiplicity, of names and forms (नामरूपे). Thus, the entire conditioned world (कार्यप्रपञ्चः) is an evolute or transformation (परिणामः) of Māyā, but a distortion or *vivartaḥ* (विवर्तः) with reference to Brahman. We hesitate to ascribe, therefore, to Śaṅkara the view that "Brahma has created and evolved the world"<sup>2</sup> on the ground that "the Sūtra-kāra adopts the विवर्तवाद (i.e. the principle of unity) as of supreme value ; but he has also retained परिणाम (i.e. the fact of the multiplicity of changes) as of subordinate value and entirely dependent on the former."<sup>3</sup> Now, the reference in the footnote to the extract from Śaṅkara's commentary on the *Vedānta sūtra* II. i. 19 (which is evidently a misprint for II. i. 14) is extremely misleading as it stands

<sup>1</sup> Ibid, p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> Pandit Kokileswar Sastri, *Advaita Philosophy*, p. 122.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 272.



mutilated in the form in which the author of this view has presented it. So doing our author incurs not only the fault of omission, but, the much more grievous one, of fathering upon Śaṅkara an unhistoric or even romantic doctrine to which the historic Śaṅkara would scarcely lend countenance. All the greatest thinkers of the world, from Socrates down to Bradley in our own day, have thus run the risk of misrepresentation at the hands of their well-meaning apologists and disciples. One need not wonder if the shades of a Śaṅkara, or a Spinoza, or a Bradley were to exclaim under the pressure of this kind of embarrassing charity: "Defend me from my friends: I can defend myself from my enemies!" Such a risk of misrepresentation—originating either from a misplaced emphasis or mutilated context—is perhaps a penalty of greatness; but an interpreter with the least pretension to historic sense and scholarship cannot with impunity adopt a policy of pick-and-choose to foist his own pet thesis on a great thinker. By challenging all foregoing interpretations, he incurs a tremendous responsibility of facing all the issues fair and square, and of grasping aright the course of dialectic or thought-development on the part of the great thinker in question. An initial bias or preconceived opinion is thus a serious handicap on the part of an interpreter.

Now the passage from which the above extract, with unacknowledged elisions, has been taken reads as follows: "The *Sūtrakāra* also asserts the non-difference of cause and effect only with regard to the state of Reality; while he had, in the preceding *Sūtra*, where he looked to the phenomenal world, compared Brahman to the ocean, etc., that comparison resting on the assumption of the world of effects not yet having been refuted (*i.e.* seen to be unreal)—the view of Brahman as undergoing modifications will moreover, be of use in the devout meditations on the qualified (*saguna*) Brahman." (Thibaut S. B. E. Vol. 34, p. 330).<sup>1</sup> This and other typical passages

1 सूत्रकारोऽपि परमार्थाभिप्रायेण तदनन्तत्वमित्याहुः । व्यवहाराभिप्रायेण तु स्यात्लोक-  
वदिति मन्त्रासमुद्रखानीयतां ब्रह्मणः कथयति अप्रत्याख्यायेव कार्यप्रपञ्चं परिणामप्रक्रियाया-  
नयति सगुणीप्राप्तेषूपयुज्यत इति.—Com. on V.S. II. i. 14.

that have been cited by the author in support of his contention cannot obviously bear the burden that is sought to be imposed on them. From contextual considerations, and the drift of Śaṅkara's thought as a whole, it readily appears that the affirmation of the world of names and forms serves only as a phase or 'moment' destined to be negated eventually in a fuller development of the dialectic. As it has been already urged (in the foregoing chapter), logically speaking, 'vivarta' presupposes 'pariṇāma.' To be neglected eventually, the world of plurality must at least appear or exist conceptually, or to adopt the language of modern logic, "subsist." "Falsity or error" as Bosanquet rightly observes "are relations that imply existences, which having reality of one kind, claim in addition to this another kind of reality which they have not. In fact all things that are called false, are called so because they claim a place or property which they do not possess. They must exist, in order to be false."<sup>1</sup> Thus it is clear that passages importing creation, evolution or even 'creative evolution' cannot possibly be construed absolutely, and handled in a centrifugal manner without reference to the central metaphysical thought of the Śaṅkara-Vedānta. To persist in doing so would be to fly in the face of such express canon of interpretation as the following one so tersely put by the *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*: "all the texts importing 'creation' do not really refer to creation, but to Brahman who is one without a second."<sup>2</sup> Hence it is Māyā that evolves a world of names and forms which in their totality constitute what we call the universe or *jagat* (जगत्). But this evolved world does, as a matter of fact, 'half reveal, half conceal' the nature of Brahman, the ultimate Reality. Accordingly, Māyā is credited with the two-fold function of concealing the nature of the real (आवरणशक्तिः) and of projecting an unreal appearance of world (विक्षेपशक्तिः). It is not therefore a privative conception merely but connotes beyond the mere absence of knowledge positive error or falsification of the

• 1 *Essentials of Logic*, p. 67.

2 न हि सृष्टिवाक्यानां सृष्टौ तात्पर्यं किन्तु अद्वयं ब्रह्मण एव ।

nature of Reality. In view of this delusive character of *Māyā*, the term *avidyā* (अविद्या) or 'nescience' has been used in the Vedāntic literature as more or less synonymous therewith. We have it on the authority of Vidyāraṇya, the author of a celebrated treatise on the Vedāntic theory of knowledge called *Vivaraṇaprameyasamgrahaḥ*. "We use the term '*māyā*' with reference to its power of producing extraordinary effects or with reference to its subserviency to the will (of the agent) ; it is *māyā* in respect of its producing a multiple appearance of one and the same object while it is *avidyā* in respect of its obscurance (of knowledge)."<sup>1</sup>

It is unprofitable for our enquiry to pursue in detail the varied interpretations these twin principles of *Māyā* and *Avidyā* have received from Śaṅkara's philosophic successors. Suffice it to note that for Śaṅkara, at least, they have been more or less synonymous. As early as in the Upanishads, prominently in the *Īśa*, the term *avidyā* figures as the generic name for Ignorance or false knowledge antagonistic to *Vidyā* or apprehension of truth. In his famous preface to the commentary on the *Vedānta-Sūtras*, Śaṅkara gives a more restricted and technical signification to *avidyā* which, as functioning through what is known as the process of *adhyāsa* (अध्यासः) or 'superimposition,' is identical therewith—at least in its psychological aspect.<sup>2</sup> Thus, it appears that the term '*avidyā*' is primarily construed in a subjective or psychological reference although Śaṅkara personally uses the terms '*Māyā*' and '*avidyā*' indiscriminately in a subjective as well as a trans-subjective or objective signification. For example, in the same context in which he illustrates the essential nature of *avidyā* as being identical with the process of *adhyāsa*, Śaṅkara proceeds to assign to it a cosmic or objective status so far as he holds it to be the sole source of all traditional distinctions, theoretical as well as practical, between the instruments and objects of

1 विदुषजमकलाकारिणेच्छाधीनत्वाकारिण वा माया इति व्यवहारः एकस्मिन्नपि वस्तुनि विविधप्रधानेन मायाऽच्छादन प्रधानेनाविद्येति ।

2 तमेतमेवं लक्षणमध्यासं पण्डिता अविवेचयन्ति ।

cognition, and of the whole catalogue of scriptures bearing on injunctions and prohibitions and even of final beatitude.<sup>1</sup> Taking into consideration, however, the consensus of the passages bearing on *avidyā*, it may safely be laid down that in Śaṅkara the emphasis is decisively on the innate relational way of thinking with its peculiar logical machinery which goes to make up the finitude of the human mind. At the same time, it appears from Śaṅkara's transcendental analysis of causality (e.g. in his commentary on the *Vedānta-Sūtras* II. i. 1, 2, 3) that he was really formulating *Māyā* as the principle of individuation, indescribable in itself and inherent in Brahman, with a *nisus* of development into the entire cosmic panorama.<sup>2</sup> This is a typical passage in Śaṅkara, illustrative of the indiscriminate use of *Māyā* and *Avidyā*. In later Vedāntic literature, however, we notice an increasing differentiation, and specification of the essential character of each. It has been generally held that *Māyā* is the principle of individuation—of Brahman appearing as Many, while *Avidyā* is the principle of obscuration, veiling the true nature of things from view. The one has acquired more or less a creative, or ontological significance, while the other a markedly epistemological. The later exponents of the Vedāntic philosophy, in their zeal for dialectical *finesse* and refinement, sought to improve upon what they took to be an uncritical and indiscriminate use of the two by Śaṅkara with their institution of a rigid differentiation between the two. So doing they thought they could help Śaṅkara out of a hopeless *impasse* to which he had been driven by the indiscriminate use of *Māyā* and *Avidyā*. In their opinion this equation led, and can only lead, to endless logical see-saw or what is technically known as *ὁστερον πρότερον* or, more properly, *circulus in demonstrando*. *Avidyā* or *Māyā* as the realm of appearances must

1 तमेतमविद्याख्यमात्मनान्नोरितरीतराध्यासं पुरस्कृत्य सर्वे प्रमाणप्रमेयव्यवहारा लौकिका वैदिकाश्च प्रवृत्ताः सर्वाणि च शास्त्राणि विधिप्रतिषेधमोक्षपराणि ।

• 2 सर्वज्ञस्येश्वरस्यात्मभूते इवाविद्याकल्पिते नामरूपे तत्त्वानात्माभ्यामनिर्वचनीये संसार-प्रपञ्चबीजभूते सर्वज्ञस्येश्वरस्य मायाशक्तिः प्रकृतिरिति च ।

presuppose, it has been contended, finite conscious subjects or *Jīvas* (जीवाः) and these subjects themselves presuppose *avidyā* as their originative condition—a vicious circle of logical interdependence! Accordingly, Vācaspati Mīśra recommends an epistemological construction and delimitation of *avidyā* as the only way out of the predicament involved in this way of thinking. An appearance or a presentation—and that is what *avidyā* as logically construed amounts to—, as Vācaspati Mīśra argued logically enough, must be, whether true or false, an appearance of something to someone. Briefly speaking, it must pre-suppose a subject and have an object, or to use his own phraseology, *avidyā* must be regarded as having *Jīva* or a finite centre of experience as its locus and *Brahman* as its object (जीवपदा ब्रह्मविषया). The difficulty is thus sought to be obviated by the postulation of a plurality of finite centres of experience co-extensive with the multiformity of *avidyā*. Each finite subject is, therefore, shut up within the world of its own specific *avidyā*, and it is only through inter-subjective intercourse that we get to the idea of the trans-subjective or objective order. That such a subjective idealism of the pluralistic type has its own besetting difficulties cannot be gainsaid. For example, as the critics of Vācaspati have pointed out, there still lurks the same fallacy from the grips of which he sought to extricate the master. But, Vācaspati might dispose of the objection by insisting on the co-existence of *avidyā* and *jīva* without any temporal priority on the part of the one over the other. They are the equal partners of a joint partnership; and, although there may be logical interdependence between the two, it is in no sense vicious. Following in the footsteps of the master, he might press the very same remarks which Śaṅkara made by way of rebutting the alleged fallacious interdependence between *Karma* and *Creation*: 'On the hypothesis of beginninglessness there is no fallacy in arguing out the case after the manner of the relation between the seed and the sprout.'<sup>1</sup>

Śaṅkara, however, would repudiate all such improvisations and apologetics. From his point of view the alleged hopeless predicament is a purely gratuitous one, and can easily be got rid of by abjuring all futile attempts to encompass fully the nature of *avidyā*. God-and-the-world-of-created-beings is some thing ultimate, an irreducible duality indispensable for our epistemology. To seek to trace the origin of *avidyā*, from something more fundamental is, as Śaṅkara pointed out by way of anticipating Kant, to make the transcendent use of an empirical category. In Śaṅkara's metaphysics such a pretentious enquiry is perpetually placed under a ban. The charge is so often laid at the door of Śaṅkara's philosophy that it fails to account for the realm of appearances or *Māyā* itself. Well, as Śaṅkara might equally urge in the very words of Dean Inge, the world of names and forms, this *Māyā*, is a solid fact which we have to accept as such and not to account for. Our business is on the stage and we get none the wiser by peeping behind the screen. In short, *Māyā* or *Avidyā* is merely the admission of the fact of individuation but is no explanation thereof. It only co-exists with Īśvara and co-eternal therewith as being a *Śakti* (शक्तिः) of Parameśvara. But how it can co-exist with Brahman is a matter which passes human comprehension, and is accordingly styled 'inexplicable' (अनिर्वचनीया). Then, in the next place, the equation of *Māyā* and *Avidyā* in Śaṅkara is no *lapsus calami*, but a studied one, emerging from his system as a whole. Even on granting that *Māyā* and *Avidyā* are primarily objective and subjective in reference respectively, it must yet be acknowledged that the two are, from the standpoint of an Absolute Idealism such as Śaṅkara's, the 'distinguishable but strictly inseparable elements of one undivided whole. They are, in the end, the twin aspects of one and the same principle of self-heterisation of Brahman, *Caitanyam* (चेतना) or the Absolute. What Śaṅkara is hinting at by this indiscriminate use of *Māyā* and *Avidyā* is that the phenomenal self (भौतिकः) and the phenomenal world (जगत्) are strictly correlative aspects of one and the same principle which is as much subjective as objective,

as much individual as universal, as much psychological as ontological. Summarily, we may note here that Śaṅkara in this conception of *Māyā* or *Avidyā* avoids as much the pitfalls of mentalism as of materialism. Further, what he seeks herein to establish is the non-duality (अद्वैतम्) between Brahman and the world as based on a transcendental analysis of causation. It is fundamentally wrong to label Śaṅkara's position in this regard as 'abstract monism' or to compare it, in conformity with the spirit thereof, to a 'lion's den' that swallows up all the traces of particular facts of experience. As we have already seen (in connection with our elaboration of the notion of 'अनन्यत्व' and treatment of the Dialectic of Causation), Śaṅkara is far from implying hereby the identity of Brahman and the world as such, but is only seeking to deny the existence of the world apart from Brahman. *Advaitism* is not *monism* or *singularism*—it is only the statement of what it is viz. the denial of duality or affirmation of *not-twoness*, as Edmond Holmes has truly grasped the distinction and oriented it to Western thought. Following in the wake of the commentator who repudiated this possible misconstruction of his position in the most emphatic terms—"What is sought to be established is the non-existence of a being (in the effect) other than that of the cause, and not their absolute identity (कारणात् पृथक्सत्ताशून्यात् साध्यते, न त्वैक्याभिप्रायेण)—the Vedāntic thinkers have untiringly harped on the same theme e.g. Vācaspati Miśra commenting on the position in the *Bhāmātī* thus: "Verily we do not mean by '*ananytva*' affirmation of identity or oneness but we only denied difference' (न खल्वनन्यत्वमित्यभेदं किन्तु भेदं व्याविधानम्), or Ānandagiri affirming in his scholium: "it is only by way of the denial of independence or difference, and not of the suggestion of identity" (स्वतन्त्रनिषेधेन... न तु ऐक्याभिप्रायेण). Finally, the frank admission of the inexplicable or indescribable nature of *Māyā* is not to be construed as an unconditional surrender to that cheap scepticism or agnosticism which stands self-condemned. If it is to be called a scepticism at all, it must be designated an enlightened one which is the befitting attitude of a philosophic inquirer before questions pertaining to first beginnings.

## LECTURE VIII.

### ĪŚVARA AND BRAHMAN: GOD AND THE ABSOLUTE.

According to Śaṅkara, Īśvara is but Brahman invested with Māyā, and Māyā, as the matrix of names and forms (नामरूपे), is to be construed in an ultimate reference as the śakti or power of Īśvara, the determination of the locus or *modus existendi* of Māyā becomes a question of first-rate philosophic importance. It may indeed be pertinently enquired—How is the existence of this indescribable māyā known at all?—Where does it inhere or whose is this nescience or *ajñāna*? Such are the queries that must inevitably crop up, although all such questions relating to māyā or *avidyā* have been perforce interdicted as bristling with dialectic difficulties. Śaṅkara, it must be confessed, has not taken up these questions *serialim* and answered them properly. But these have been taken up in right earnest by his philosophic successors,\* who had to meet the criticisms of dialecticians of rival schools of philosophical thought. These may not have been always quite illuminating from the philosophical point of view. But they cannot be ignored all the same. As regards the manifesting agency of *avidyā*, it has been held by the *Advaitasiddhi*, for example, that it is the object, not of pure consciousness (युक्तेतन्त्रं) but of consciousness as witness (साक्षितेतन्त्रं) it being manifested by the consciousness which it veils, verily as the mythical *Rāhu* (or the eclipsing agency) is shown forth by the Sun which it eclipses (राहुवत् ज्ञातव्येतन्त्रप्रकाशाविद्या इति). As an object of knowledge, therefore, it is real and positive in character,—its reality being only of an adventitious character, liable to be sublated by knowledge of Truth. As *Citsukhī* puts it: '*avidyā* is a beginningless positive entity which is destroyed by knowledge.'



(अनादिभावपं यद्विज्ञानेन विलीयते.)<sup>1</sup> As such it is not absolute *Reality* and its existence is inferred from its effects even as heat is inferred as the power of fire (नितत्त्वा काय्यगम्यास्याः शक्तिर्मायाप्रशक्तिवत्.) Broadly speaking, it is Brahman, the absolutely Real, that<sup>i</sup> is the locus, substratum or illuminating agency of *māyā* or *avidyā*. But transcendently conceived, there can be no *māyā* or *avidyā* in Brahman. As enveloped by, or as exercising this power (मायाशक्तिः) Brahman becomes phenomenalised and relative. It ceases to be the Absolute and becomes *Īśvara* or Personal God or even the *Saguna Brahman* (सगुणं ब्रह्म). So far as we are in the ~~region~~ region of logic and dialectic, the region of the *dvaita* (द्वैत), the highest category is undoubtedly this determinate *Īśvara*, strictly correlative to the world of names and forms (नामरूपे), whether evolved or at least charged with a *nisus* towards evolution and manifestation. But above and beyond these looms the silent background of a still higher irrelative Reality, the indeterminate Brahman (निर्गुणं ब्रह्म)—the white canvas on which there is the interplay of light and shade, of change and mutation, of creation and destruction. The Spinozistic *natura naturans* which is strictly correlative to *natura naturata* is not the ultimate principle—the Absolute, the Indeterminate, characterless Brahman (*nirguṇa Brahman*) in the *Śaṅkara*ite sense—but is only the *Īśvara* or personal God relative to, and immanent in the world. *Śaṅkara* is uncompromising with regard to the transcendent nature of *Nirguṇa Brahman*, the ultimate Reality—transcending all predication and discursive thinking. With a Bradleyan emphasis, *Śaṅkara* rules out the claim of thought to over-reach the distinction of subject and object, and re-construct the Absolute which must for all times lie on the other side of thought—behind the subject-object relation which is ultimate for thought. The relation between *Śaṅkara*'s *Brahman* and *Īśvara* has, indeed, proved a hard nut to crack to many oriental scholars of note, Deussen and Max Müller not excepted. *Īśvara* is admittedly the highest in the realm of the finite existence, albeit finite, relative and phenomenal—

an 'appearance' in Bradley's sense. It is the God of religious consciousness and worship ; and thus 'with this admitted imperfection' in our notion of God 'our religion is saved.'<sup>1</sup> True it is that 'we must needs love the highest'—but on condition that 'we see it.' Verily 'no man can see God's face and live.' It is by the very nature of the case inevitable that this highest, the Brahman, with 'a cloud of unknowing' on its face, the veritable Godhead of the mystics and philosophers, like Eckhart and Plotinus, should perpetually elude our grasp, and finite personal God, the *Īśvara*, as '*Brahman* cast though the moulds of logic' should go on tabernacling among its human worshippers. In spite of the fact that Śaṅkara does use the epithets '*param*' (परम्) and '*aparam*' (अपरम्), the phrase 'lower God' to which<sup>a</sup> Deussen has given currency, hardly does justice to Śaṅkara in this regard. It may not unlikely give rise to the misconception that Śaṅkara's *Īśvara* is not very far removed from 'a mere self-painting of the yearning spirit' having 'no more solidity or steadiness than floating air-bubbles, gay in the sunshine and broken by the passing wind'—a travesty of the object of religious homage which was justly anathematized by Martineau in the 'Introduction' to his *Study of Religion*. But Śaṅkara's was far too astute and devout a mind not to have realised that such a 'gleaming ideal,' howsoever attractive and appealing to our æsthetic susceptibilities cannot *ipso facto* aspire to be the 'object' of religious sentiment and worship. Here, if anywhere, can we realise the underlying philosophical significance of *vigraha* (विग्रहः) in all Hindu worship, even from a strictly Śaṅkarite point of view. Śaṅkara is sometimes 'defended in the matter of 'bowing down to idols'—and that in strict consistency with his philosophical persuasion—on the ground that 'idolatry' is 'a crying necessity of our nature.' But the defence entirely misses the spirit underlying such procedure of the Advaitist. Nevertheless, for the Advaitist of the Śaṅkara-Vedānta type as well as for all else, it is by way of the 'gleaming ideal' that one feels the

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 429.

direct impact of, and communion with, 'the everlasting Real'—'the abiding presence and persuasion of the Soul of souls.' The author of the *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* is, therefore guilty of no such sublime inconsequence, as is often alleged, in prefacing his philosophical inquiry with a benedictory invocation or salutation to the Deity, and thus fettering the very spirit of such enquiry by an advance statement on the nature of the object one is pledged to survey. It is in perfect accord with the tradition of Śaṅkara-Vedānta—without compromising in the least the teachings of that school—that the author believes he can, and does, bow down to the Supreme Spirit who is made up of the very stuff of Being, Consciousness and Bliss ('तं नौमि परमात्मानं सच्चिदानन्दविग्रहम्'). This very attitude or act of worship (नमस्कार्यता) is made possible, as the Śikhāmaṇi proceeds to justify, on the assumption of an irreducible and indispensable interval between, the human and the divine, the worshipper and the worshipped (कल्पितभेदनादाय).

In spite of radical divergences in respect of method and conclusion, Prof. Alexander's treatment of the problem of 'Deity' and 'the Religious Sentiment' and other minor problems kindred therewith, affords a fruitful comparison with the line of thinking pursued by Śaṅkara-Vedānta. With 'the practical or religious approach to God'<sup>1</sup> a follower of the Śaṅkara-Vedānta School, will go in enthusiastic assent, and would perhaps concede the debatable issue: 'what we worship, that is God.'<sup>2</sup> He would, furthermore, accept that 'religion is faith in deity, or in God with the quality of deity,' the object of the religious sentiment being, however, 'no mere imagination which corresponds to subjective and possibly illusory movement of mind,'<sup>3</sup> nor 'itself a value' 'for values are human inventions and deity is ultra-human.'<sup>4</sup> Following up two radically different lines of thought the philosopher of the Śaṅkara-Vedānta School and Prof. Alexander seem to be envisaging

<sup>1</sup> Alexander, '*Space, Time and Deity*,' Vol. II, p. 341. "

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 341.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 377.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, p. 409.

the same demand of the religious consciousness so far as the latter holds that 'the qualified infinite is not merely ideal as implying, like all infinities, a conceptual element, but it is ideal because it is not actual'<sup>1</sup> and 'thus there is no actual infinite being with the quality of deity ; but there is an actual infinite, the whole universe, with a nisus to deity ; and this is the God of the religious consciousness, though that consciousness habitually forecasts the divinity of its object as actually realised in an individual form.'<sup>2</sup> There is much here that answers to the characterisation of *saguna* (सगुणं) 'qualified' or determinate Brahman as obtaining in the Śaṅkara-Vedānta School ; but, then, there is a complete parting of the ways so far Prof. Alexander tries to follow up resolutely that 'practical' approach 'with a metaphysical inquiry' on the ground that 'were it not on the other hand for the speculative or reflective justification, the God of religious sentiment would have no sure root in things. Religion leans on metaphysics for the justification of its indefeasible conviction of the reality of its object ; philosophy leans on religion to justify it in calling the possessor of deity by the religious name of God.'<sup>3</sup> So far from envisaging the 'practical' approach to the God of religious sentiment with a metaphysical grounding of the same, Śaṅkara-Vedānta is definitely chary of a metaphysical or speculative justification of the concept of a *Saguna Brahman* or *Īśvara* which is believed to be superseded and rendered nugatory by the philosophical Absolute, the unqualified indeterminate Brahman (निर्गुणं ब्रह्म) which is, verily like Bradley's Absolute, indescribable except as a cluster of negations—'neither personal nor moral nor beautiful nor true.' Or, as Bradley brings out the inherent inconsistency in religious consciousness : "We may say that God is not God, till he has become all in all, and that a God which is all in all is not the God of religion. God is but an aspect and that must mean but an appearance of the Absolute."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p. 364.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 361-2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, p. 342.

<sup>4</sup> *Appearance and Reality*, (2nd ed.), p. 448.

This position he re-affirms in his latest book<sup>1</sup> with the words : "A God that can say to himself 'I' as against you and me, is not in my judgment defensible as the last and complete truth for metaphysics" ; nevertheless he retains the notion all the same, not 'as satisfying our last intellectual demands'<sup>2</sup> but as 'required in practice by the highest religion'<sup>3</sup> for, after all, in his view 'the essence of religion is practical.'<sup>4</sup> It is rather unfortunate, as even Mr. A. E. Taylor, one of the most ardent of Bradley's advocates, held in one of the commemorative notices on Bradley, that Bradley should have treated 'religion' as something exclusively practical. By so doing he was unquestionably opening the door to that unhappy disruption between the theoretical and the practical which, as tracing its descent from its modern exponent, Immanuel Kant, reached its climax in Ritschl's 'repudiation' of metaphysics' and the anti-metaphysical campaign carried on by Ritschlianism in the interest of religious beliefs. Such an apparently effective weapon for the salvage of religious beliefs against the encroaching tide of Rationalism and Agnosticism really nurtures a seed of weakness within it, and this we have learned, through a slow and painful process, from the instructive errors of the past.

The salutary lesson which the history of religion has imparted to us is that a house divided against itself can not stand ; and, further, 'man can not find rest by trying to balance himself thus first on one leg and then on another.' If one were to read between the lines, one would decipher such an anti-metaphysical and practical emphasis put upon religious beliefs and worship in Śaṅkara's own observations on the point. Take, for example, the famous commentary (on II. i. 14) of the *Vedānta-sūtras* where we are told that 'Īśvara is limited by the unreal modifications of names and forms.....but what the scriptures set forth is the transcendence of the practical relation between the (moral) governor and the governed on the

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1 *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 432.

2 *Ibid*, p. 433.

3 *Ibid*, p. 433.

4 *Ibid*, p. 449.

plane of transcendent Reality and the restriction of this relation of the governor and the governed to the empirical plane or plane of practice.<sup>1</sup> Having pursued the thought of the master, the author of the *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* has brought the point into clearer relief thus: "But the texts bearing on *Saguna Brahman* and read in the context of worship have reference only to the attributes ascribed, in dependence on the form of worship, and not to an intrinsically qualified or determinate Brahman."<sup>2</sup> The instrumental relation in which the worship of *Saguna Brahman* stands to the intuition of indeterminate Brahman has been further substantiated by a typical quotation from the *Vedāntakalpataru* of Amalānanda Svāmī, flourishing about the middle of the thirteenth century (1260 A. D. approximately) and following close upon the footsteps of Śaṅkara and Vācaspati Miśra of the Vedānta school. Says our author, "Even the worship of *Saguna Brahman* is contributory, by way of securing one-mindedness, to the immediate intuition of Brahman devoid of all modification or characterisation. As it has been observed: 'Those that are mentally inefficient, incapable of immediately experiencing the supreme indeterminate Brahman, represent [It] through specific determinations; and when, by reason of (constant) association with *saguna Brahman*, their minds are brought under control there ensues the immediate experience of the same Being divested of all hypothetical characters.'"<sup>3</sup> Whatever be the particular status of *Īśvara* or *Saguna Brahman* in the system of Vedānta and the relation in which it

1 एवमविद्याकृतनामरूपोपाध्यनुरोधोच्यते भवति.....परमार्थावस्थायामौचित्य-  
शितव्यादिव्यवहाराभावः प्रदर्श्यते । व्यवहारावस्थायान्तःकृतः श्रुतावपीश्वरादिव्यवहारः—Com.  
on V. S. II. i. 14.

2 उपासनाप्रकरणपठित-सगुणब्रह्मवाक्यानां उपासनाविध्यपेक्षित-गुणारोपमात्रपरत्वं  
न सगुणपरत्वम् ।

3 सगुणोपासनमपि चित्तैकाग्र्यद्वारा निर्विशेषब्रह्मसाक्षात्कारहेतुः । तदुक्तम्—  
निर्विशेषं परं ब्रह्म साक्षात्कर्तुमनीश्वराः  
ये मन्दास्तेऽनुकल्पन्ते सविशेषनिरूपणैः ॥  
वशीकृते मनस्येषां सगुणब्रह्मशौलनात् ।  
तदाविर्भवेत् साक्षादपेतोपाधिकल्पनम् ॥

stands to the Absolute or Brahman, this much is certain that they are not the two aspects of one and the same being, as is sometimes supposed. In the system of Śaṅkara-Vedānta, a reality that has two sides or aspects or is the union of contradictories fails *ipso facto* to pass for the highest reality. Such a union of contradictories, as we have seen in a previous reference, can give us at least an empirical reality. Pile up your relativities or aspects as you may, you never rise on the stepping-stones of the relative to the Absolute. Hence the Kantian criticism of the Cosmological or the Teleological argument on the score of its ever falling short of establishing an Infinite or Absolute is quite to the point. Although Bradley is in agreement with Śaṅkara on the point that to think the Absolute is to bring it down to the level of the relative and the finite, Bradley seems, in spite of the hesitating language he employs on the question, to be in favour of construing the Absolute as a systematic unity of differentiated particulars. But Śaṅkara is uncompromising on that question. His Absolute is the *Nirguṇa* Brahman which is absolutely transcendent and undifferentiated (कूटस्थमित्यं).—transcending the compass of all philosophy and all discursive thought.

Now, we are in a position to tackle the question of *upādāna-kāraṇam* (उपादानकारणम्) or *causa materialis* and *nimitta-kāraṇam* (निमित्तकारणम्) or *causa efficiens* in the system of Śaṅkara-Vedānta. At the very outset one has to accept *cum grano salis* an unqualified dictum like the following: “Everywhere Śaṅkara has repeatedly declared Brahman to be — ‘अभिन्न-निमित्तोपादानकारणम्’ ;—that is to say, his Brahman is to be regarded in *both* of its aspects i.e. Brahman’s transcendency and immanence are *inseparable* (अभिन्न) aspects.”<sup>1</sup> “Brahman is *both* the Efficient cause (निमित्तकारणम्) and Material cause (उपादानकारणम्) of the world.”<sup>2</sup> It is true that Śaṅkara does stand committed to such a construction so far as he has made the unambiguous statement: “Brahman is to be admitted as a material as well

<sup>1</sup> Pandit Kokileswar Sastri : *Advaita Philosophy*, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4.

as an efficient cause.”<sup>1</sup> For the sake of precision, he ought to have substituted the word ‘Īśvara’ for ‘Brahman’; but, as we have seen, Śaṅkara uses this pair of terms as well as the other pair, \**Māyā* and *Avidyā*, rather indiscriminately, perhaps not to leave the faintest shadow of a dualism or duality in his *advaita* (non-dualistic) metaphysics. But there is hardly any room for doubt that he here means ‘Īśvara’—as clearly evident from his commentary on the Chāndogya Upanishad (III. xiv. 2) where he says: “The highest Brahman becomes the lower Īśvara through association with a pure limitation (विशुद्धोपाधिसम्बन्धात्), when one conceives of it.” This meaning or standpoint of the master becomes increasingly apparent in the Neo-Vedāntic School, beginning with his immediate disciples and reaching down in apostolic succession to Dharmarāja-dhvarīndra, the author of the *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*. Sureśvar ācāryya, for example, brings out the true sense in which the master’s utterance, which is admittedly a bit cryptic, is to be construed. Says he in his famous *Vārttika*: “Brahman is called the material cause of this cosmic panorama (of duality) (by implication) or by way of the support of Nescience which is (directly) the material cause of the *loul ensemble* of duality.”<sup>2</sup> Hence there is justification for superseding the letter of Śaṅkara’s commentary in favour of the spirit thereof, and it becomes the more imperative if we try to comprehend the true significance of Śaṅkara’s dictum, as we needs must, in the light of the progressive differentiation in later Vedānta Schools of the metaphysical issues involved in this very problem. Instead of pursuing the distracting varieties of opinion obtaining in the Neo-Vedāntic school on this specific question, we shall content ourselves with a few typical ones.

The first important view, one encounters in this connection, is that of Vācaspati Miśra who holds Brahman (which is, in his

1 उपादानकारणस्य ब्रह्माभ्युपगमत्वं निमित्तकारणस्य—Com. on V. S. I. iv. 23.

2 अस्य वैतज्जालस्य यदुपादानकारणं ।

अज्ञानं तदुपाधित्वं ब्रह्मकारणमुच्यते ॥



opinion, the object of Nescience<sup>1</sup>) to be the material cause of this empirical world of plurality (प्रपञ्चः), *Māyā* being only an auxiliary (मायासहकारि मात्रम्). Strictly, in accordance with his own view of the relation between *Jīva* and *Brahman*, Vācaspati ought to have said, as it was later pointed out by Brahmānanda Saraswatī and Madhusūdana, that it is not Brahman but *Jīva*, (as the real support of *Avidyā*) that is the material cause of the empirical order ; or, rather, *Jīva* associated with *Avidyā* is the material cause—and this position does not conflict with that of the Scriptures purporting to hold Brahman as the *causa materialis* in as much as there is, transcendently speaking, no difference between *Jīva* and *Brahman*.<sup>2</sup> Amalānanda, the celebrated author of the *Vedāntakalpataru* and a staunch supporter of the *Bhāmātī*, takes exception to this construction of Vācaspati's utterances on the point. He seems to be favouring a far too literal construction of Śaṅkara's original statements on the problem, so far as he re-affirms that Brahman is the material cause, *Avidyā* as inhering in *Jīva* being the instrumental cause of the world. The position is buttressed by the classic analogy of the 'rope-serpent' illusion. In point of fact what appears as the serpent is the rope, the real substratum of the illusion. As the rope affords the material of the illusion, our ignorance serving in an instrumental relation thereto, or as a contributory cause, so is the matter of the manifold (प्रपञ्चः) is Brahman, the ignorance innate in *Jīva* being instrumental thereto. The next in importance is the view of Sarvajñ-ātmanmuni (about 900 A. D.), a professed follower and adherent of Śaṅkara's views, who adopts a similar position in his *Śaṅkshhepaśārīraka* so far as he holds the absolute Brahman or Being-in-itself to be the material cause of the entire manifold of existence, there being no other Reality besides it. He adds the proviso, however, that the Being-in-itself, which cannot

1 In accordance with his view that *Māyā* is centred in *Jīva* and has Brahman for its object (माया जीवपदा ब्रह्मविषया).

2 जीव एव प्रपञ्चाधारः, न ब्रह्म ; तेन जीवाविद्ययोरेव प्रपञ्चोपादानत्वम् । जीव-ब्रह्मयोर्वास्तवभेदात् ब्रह्मणोऽनगदुपादानत्वादि न्यून्युपपत्तिः ।—लघुचन्द्रिका ।

*eo ipso* be the cause of this manifold, can nevertheless serve in that causal capacity, indirectly, as it were, through *Māyā*. Such a view is, however, strongly contested by those who held that Brahman or Consciousness in its integrity can have no relation to anything and as such must be strictly non-relative, absolute or transcendent. This is the view which has been held in a modified form by Prakāśātmayati, (almost 1200 A.D.), the author of *Vivaraṇa*, and in an uncompromising and radical form by Prakāśānanda, the author of *Vedānta-siddhānta-muktāvalī*, the former holding Brahman as conditioned by *Māyā* i.e. Īśvara (and not pure *Caitanya*) to be the material cause of the empirical order—a veritable accident on the part of Brahman (तटस्थतया), while the latter roundly conceiving *Māyā* to be the material cause of the manifold, Brahman as a transcendent principle being *prima facie* incapable of entry into the relation of cause and effect. The author of the *Padārthatattva-nirṇaya* regards Brahman and *Māyā* to be the material cause—the world being a reflection (विवर्तः) of Brahman and a transformation or evolution (परिणामः) of *Māyā*.<sup>1</sup> Vidyāraṇya (about 1350 A.D.) again, (who is generally identified with Mādhava) held that *Īśvara* is the material cause of the objective, while *Jīva* is the cause of the subjective world. Of the many interesting variations and developments of this problem in later Advaita-Vedānta that are dealt with extensively by Apyaya-dikshita (about 1530 A.D.) in his *Siddhāntaleśa* we select the following as being an interesting and important one viz., that the gross objective world e.g., the sky is the transformation of *Māyā* as supported in Īśvara who is, therefore, the material cause of the universe while the subtle world of mind etc. is the evolute or effect of the Avidyā inherent in *Jīva* which, again, is the product of the great elements created or evolved by the *Māyā* inhering in Brahman and thus there is joint

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1 प्रपञ्चे उभयोरपि मायाब्रह्मणोदपादानत्वम्; तत्र च परिणामितया मायाया उपादानत्वम्; अविवर्तमानतया च ब्रह्मण उपादानत्वम् । ब्रह्मविवर्तमानतया, अविद्यापरिणामानतया उपादानम्—*Siddhāntaleśa*, i.

material causality here.<sup>1</sup> As a final statement of the Advaita position with regard to this question, reference may be made to the conclusive—the latest as well as the most authoritative—comments offered by *Dharmarājādhvarīndra* (about 1550 A.D.) in the *Vedāntaparibhāṣhā* by way of rounding up the discussion on this very topic in words to the following effect: “Nor is it to be maintained that it is Brahman which is the material cause of the universe. Tenable, however, is the admission (of Brahman) as the substratum or locus of this cosmic appearance, but the formless or indivisible Brahman as the transforming material cause (of the universe) is (intrinsically) untenable or inadmissible. Instead of labouring the point further, it is accordingly concluded that the transforming or evolvent material cause of this entire manifold is *Māyā* and not Brahman.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, on a retrospective review of all these different explanations, it is easy to see that all of them agree, in spite of their well-recognised divergences, in positing two principles as explanatory of the empirical order: Brahman, the principle of Being and *Māyā*, the principle of Becoming. It is neither feasible nor indispensable to consider in historic succession the literature that has come into being by way of reaction against the doctrine of *Māyā* or *Āvidyā* current in the Śaṅkara-Vedānta School. Whatever the rôle in which it appears in the Śaṅkara-Vedānta School, it seems to have been given a permanent lease of existence in the heritage of reaction that followed in its wake. The first in importance is the charge of *āśrayānupapatti* (आश्रयानुपपत्ति; i.e. the impossibility of a locus), preferred against *avidyā* by Rāmānuja, the protagonist of the opposition, in his famous enunciation of a ‘seven-fold’ inadmissibility of *avidyā*. Granted its existence, what is it that

1 त्रियदादिप्रपञ्च ईश्वरसृष्टमायापरिणाम इति, तत्र ईश्वर उपादानम्; अन्तःकरणादिकं तु ईश्वरसृष्टमायापरिणाम-महाभूतीपसृष्टजीवाविद्याकृतमभतमूलाकार्यमिति. तदोभयो-रुपादानत्वम्—*Siddhāntaleśa*, i.

2 न च...ब्रह्मैव जगदुपादानं स्यात् इति वाच्यम् प्रपञ्चभ्रमाधिष्ठानत्वरूपस्य तस्यैतत्वात् परिणामित्वरूपस्य उपादानत्वस्य निरवयवब्रह्मण्यनुपपत्तेः। तथाच प्रपञ्चस्य परिणाम्युपादानं माया न ब्रह्मेति सिद्धान्त इत्यलमतिप्रपञ्चेन—वेदान्तपरिभाषा, षष्ठः परिच्छेदः।

serves, so contends Rāmānuja, as its locus in the matter of generating error or falsity? Not surely, the *Jīva*, in as much as the *Jīva* [itself] is made or formed by *avidyā*. Nor even *Brahman*, for it, as being of the nature of Self-manifest knowledge is (necessarilly) antagonistic to *avidyā*.<sup>1</sup> Pursuing the tenour of this criticism Rāmānuja concludes that *māyā* and *ajñānam* are not the same thing. *Māyā* is only a *śakti* or power of *Īśvara*, inhering in Him, while *ajñānam* is mere absence of knowledge. *Ajñānam* inheres in *Jīva* and mystifies him alone. It cannot contaminate, by its contact, Brahman who is the repository of infinite knowledge or omniscience. Similarly, Madhvācāryya, the chief exponent of the dualistic Vedānta, embarks upon his philosophic career with the avowed purpose of establishing the reality of the sense-world—by way of a refutation of the doctrine of *māyā* and a collateral justification of the five-fold difference (भेदपञ्चकः) namely, that between *Īśvara* and *Jīva*, between *Īśvara* and the material world, between one *Jīva* and another, between *Jīva* and the material world and, finally, that among the parts of the material world. In a monograph entitled the refutation of the *māyā* doctrine (मायावादखंडनम्), he argues that, on its own showing, the reality of the oneness of the self with Brahman is incomprehensible, for, on the omission of a reality in excess of the individuality of self, the [proposed] doctrine of *advaita* or non-dualism is undermined (नहि ब्रह्मात्मैकास्य याथार्थ्यं तत्पक्षे। अद्वैतहानिः स्वरूपातिरेके). On the denial of an excess (अनतिरेके), there is, again, incurred the fallacy of *siddhasāadhanatā* (सिद्धसाधनता,) owing to the self-manifest character of the self. In two other minor treatises called प्रपञ्चमिथ्यात्ववादखंडनम् and तत्त्वोद्यत, he disqualifies the inference of cosmic unreality as being ‘unproved’ or *asiddha* (यदि जगन्मिथ्या स्यात् तदा दृश्यत्वाद्यनुमानस्यापि जगदन्तःपातित्वेन मिथ्यात्वादसिद्धिः स्यात्).

Now, it may be asked: whether you admit ‘that Brahman, cast in the moulds of logic, is the world of experience or that it is *Īśvara*’—which is, after all, a matter of terminology,—is

1 सा हि किमाश्रित्य धर्मं जनयतीति । न तावज्जीवमाश्रित्य ; अविद्यापरिकल्पित-लज्जीवभावस्य । नापि ब्रह्माश्रित्य ; तस्य स्वयंप्रकाशज्ञानरूपत्वेनाविद्याविरोधित्वात्—*Sreebhāṣyam*, I. i. i.

not the strictly unqualified monism of Śaṅkara held in jeopardy or stultified by the admission of a principle of becoming by the side of Brahman or Being-in-itself, or even of something which is non-Being—call it the principle of objectivity, of self-expression, of *prakṛti* or *Māyā*—nestling in the heart of Being and thus contradictory to its nature? All systematic attempts at explanation, whether in the East or in the West, have been invariably pulled up before the problem of a first beginning and constrained to employ the same device of catching 'nature half-in and half-out', with individual variations of their own. To begin with the classic prototype of it in the West, we may refer to the Platonic *ὕλη* (matter) or even *μή οὐ* the element of negativity in its relation to *εἶδος* (Idea). Both *Māyā* and *ὕλη* have a functional similarity so far as they afford an explanation of an apparent world of diversity or 'copies' standing over against the sole or exclusive reality of the Absolute or Idea which, as eternally perfect and complete, is thwarted in its activity of realisation by this passive or negative principle. On closer inspection, however, differences stand out against the background of similarity: *Māyā* is essentially a form of energy, (शक्तिः) credited, as we have seen, with the dual function of projecting a world-appearance and of veiling the nature of ultimate Reality, and is productive of names and forms (नामरूपे), while *ὕλη* is inert or passive, everything being the creation of the Idea which alone is the source of all creative potency or energy; further, Śaṅkara's *Māyā* is neither real nor unreal (सदसदव्यामनिर्वचनीया) but the Platonic *ὕλη* is both real and unreal—real as a principle or agency of resistance or obstruction and unreal as being opposed or contradictory to the Idea which alone is real. Similarly, Kant introduces an element of contingency by way of 'a manifold' of sense, traceable to the 'things in themselves' (*Dinge an sich*) ultimately, and constitutive of the raw material of experience which the transcendental unity of apperception has to subsume under the categories in order to convert it into the flesh and blood of experience. Experience is, thus, in Kant's rendering of the case the result of interaction between the transcendental unity of apperception

and the things in themselves, the latter being, at least, transcendently, not less real than the former. According to Śaṅkara, however, the manifold is a determination in *Cailanya*, which is to be ascribed to the process of *Adhyāsa* or illusory superimposition conditioned by *Māyā*. But *Māyā*, unlike Kant's *Dinge an sich*, has not the same transcendental reality as Brahman which is Being (सत्), pure and simple, or real absolutely, while *Māyā* is neither real nor unreal but indeterminate as a category.

Fichte, again, having made the transcendental unity of apperception the settled point of departure in his metaphysical construction, goes beyond Kant in investing the principle of self-consciousness—the logical 'I think' which had only a regulative validity for Kant—with constitutive or metaphysical reality as well. Having a firm grip on the central truth of the Kantian analysis of experience, Fichte thinks that he has discovered the secret of Kant's philosophy—which he had only suggested but left undeveloped—in the conception of Pure Self or Ego, the 'I am' at the back of 'I think' or Self-consciousness and represents it as absolute creative agency—an act and product in one, or the original 'deed-act,' the *thathandlung*. This Ego or Self thus affirms or posits itself but this it can do only by opposing or distinguishing from itself a non-ego. By thus limiting and negating itself, the absolute Ego (*Ichheit*) brings into being the element of otherness which is the *conditio sine quâ non* of the concrete relation of subject and object or of self-consciousness. In thus attaining to self-consciousness—by breaking itself, as it were, against some obstacle and by being turned back, so to speak, upon itself—the absolute ego or transcendental Subject experiences no intrusion of a foreign factor but is determined from within. This notion of self-negation, self-limitation or self-determination is what Fichte sought to convey by the term '*Anstoss*' which has its remote ancestor in Śaṅkara's *Māyā*. Summarily speaking, no world is possible without a consciousness which represents it; no consciousness possible without the reflection (literally the turning back) of the ego on itself ('re'=again; *flēctere*= 'bend'

or 'turn')<sup>1</sup> lastly, no reflection without limitation, without an opposition or non-ego—this is the series of consecutive steps whereby *Anstoss* is deduced. It is interesting to note, further, that the dual function of self-affirmation and self-negation, of self-expansion and self-limitation, of *Anstoss*, has its counterpart in the double capacity of projection (विक्षेपशक्तिः) and veiling (आवरणशक्तिः) of *Māyā*. But there is just this difference that while Fichte construes this double function of the absolute Ego in an ultimate or metaphysical reference, Śaṅkara would interpret this double process of *Māyā* in a restricted or metaphorical sense—acknowledging its empirical reality, reality from the finite point of view, but clearly affirming its transcendental ideality, unreality from the standpoint of the Absolute or Brahman. There is a far more close parallelism between Śaṅkara's *Māyā* and Schelling's 'Dark Ground': both import something in the Absolute yet not the Absolute; both originate the element of finitude in the Infinite; in the one case the Absolute or Brahman becomes *Īśvara* or Personal God through *Māyā*, in the other the groundless, the *neutrum* or the absolute develops through the *Dark Ground* into the personal God of love or Creator; both make possible gradations of individuality and perfection or a hierarchy or scale of values in one sense, (अतिशयता, तारतम्यं, अन्निकारिभेदः), while in another sense recognising all individuals or *jīvas* as equally infinite, absolute and perfect. One fundamental difference comes out, however, as we recall the fact that the 'dark ground' is a principle of self-realisation on the part of the Absolute, while Śaṅkara's Brahman is eternally realised and self-centred wholly unaffected by *Māyā*. This is a crucial point which must not be lost sight of in our comparison of Śaṅkara's position in this regard with its Eastern and Western analogues. In Śaṅkara's sense *Māyā* can be characterised as a principle of self-expression or self-realisation only with reference to *Īśvara* and not Brahman. So long as we are in the realm of *dvaita* (द्वैत),—the realm of logic and practice—the highest reality is, admittedly, not the indeterminate, unqualified *Brahman* or Absolute but the determinate, qualified *Saguna Brahman* or *Īśvara* that does offer

an explanation of the world of becoming from the human end—by combining within himself the natures of being and becoming, of the non-relative or absolute Brahman and the relative or dependent world. “Thus Śaṅkara,” as it has been justly observed,<sup>1</sup> “attempts to combine the ideas of the negation of the finite and the presupposition of the finite in his conception of *Īśvara*. The charge against Spinoza that he reduces the Absolute to a mere blank of indeterminate being, which he inconsistently transforms into the self-determining God, has no force against Śaṅkara, who commits no such sublime inconsequence... But there is throughout Śaṅkara’s philosophy the pervading prejudice against the adequacy of logic and the finality of its ideal, and so we find that this conception of *Saguna* Brahman, or concrete spirit is, according to him, so riddled with self-contradictions and inconsistencies that it cannot be regarded as the highest reality.”

Now, whether, in the light of our foregoing discussions, we choose to regard *Īśvara* as different from *Brahman*, or as one with *Brahman*, there is no denying the fact that the conception of *Saguna Brahman*, *Īśvara* or Creator must be understood as the strict correlative of the world of names and forms (नामरूपे), whether evolved or unevolved. Śaṅkara is unambiguously emphatic on this point and would urge with a Hegelian emphasis *totidem verbis*: ‘Without the world, God is not God.’ *Īśvara* as the self-conscious Brahman is not to be rendered by the words ‘God’ merely, but the phrase ‘God-and-the-world,’ to use an expression popularised by James Ward, would better express the import of Śaṅkara’s ‘*Īśvara*.’ Although not in doctrinal sympathy with the notion of creation understood in an ultimate or metaphysical sense (न चेयं परमार्थविषया सृष्टिः<sup>2</sup>) Śaṅkara was far too acute a logician to ignore or tone down the strict correlativity of Creator and the creation, God and the world or the subject and the object. By way of expounding the Vedāntic theory of ‘motivated creation’ (ईक्षापूर्वकमेव सृष्टिम्) in his com-

•1 Prof. S. Rādhākṛishnan, ‘Indian Philosophy’ Vol. II., pp. 558-9.

2 Com. on V.S. II. i. 34.



mentary on the *sūtra* 'ईक्षतेर्नाशब्दम्' (I. i. 5) Śaṅkara proceeds to argue thus: "In the case however, of a transitive, specific reference to the object (of the activity of conscious choice or motivation), the texts bearing on the design or purpose of Brahman become all the more cogent or appropriate (as the intransitive use of such other-regarding activities has been justified with reference to their proper objects understood in that context). What, then, is that thing, which is, prior to creation, the object of God's omniscience?—we reply: it is the (world of) names and forms, indefinable either as ultimately real or the reverse, and (as yet) unevolved but with *nisus* or impulse towards evolution or articulation."<sup>1</sup> So construed it is the Johannine Logos, the Word that was with God in the beginning. A God or *Īśvara* before creation is after all, as Hegel pointed out, a figurative way of speaking—an abstract possibility, like God the Father of the Christian Trinity in its exclusiveness, which is anything but real. It would thus compare not unfavourably with the Absolute Idea of Hegel. But Śaṅkara was far too securely lodged in the logical admission of the strict correlativity of subject and object to allow himself to use figurative expressions that are calculated to unhinge this correlation. It is true, in a sense, that God *becomes* or emerges for 'so long as creation and destruction are real movements in the life of God, the latter is not above time but is subject to time; so that, even as creation and destruction belong to the empirical world, *Īśvara* belongs to it.'<sup>2</sup> But this admission does in no way conflict with Śaṅkara's adherence to the logical aspect of the question. It is that very logical demand which leads him to interpret creation as eternal (अनादिरेष संसारः)<sup>3</sup>. The periodical creation and dissolution to which Śaṅkara also has given countenance, following the lead of *Śruti* and *Smṛiti*, are understood as the developed

1 कर्मोपेक्षायां तु ब्रह्मण ईक्षित्वत्पुनरुक्तयः सुतरामुपपन्नाः । किं पुनस्तत्कर्म यत् प्रागुत्पत्तेरौच्यज्ञानस्य विषयो भवतीति । तत्त्वान्यत्वाभ्यामनिर्वचनीये नामरूपे अव्याकृते व्याप्तिर्कौषिंते इति ब्रूमः—Com. on V.S. I. i. 5.

2 Prof. Rādhākṛiṣṇan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 558.

3 Com. on V.S. II. i. 36.

and the undeveloped state of names and forms so, as not to imperil this logical order—by maintaining in tact the two terms of a relation. Without this logical censorship, the religious imagination of man is too apt to project a fancied picture of a lonely God into the vacancy before the world was, that is, before God was, in strictness of language, God and paint God as tired of this loneliness and creating the world out of nothing by the issue of a fiat or decree. Even Hegel seems to have succumbed to this temptation so far as he closes his 'Phenomenology' with the well-known lines of Schiller :

"Friendless was the mighty Lord of worlds,  
Felt defect—therefore created spirits,  
Blessed mirrors of his blessedness....."

As it has been truly remarked :<sup>1</sup> "the divine Éremite, as a pre-existent Creator, is a figure, if one may so speak, of the logical imagination : it indicates what God is not, it does not tell us what He once was." On account of the invariable intrusion of the time-perspective—as for example, in the Biblical chronology of creation fixed at 4004 B. C.—many a scaffolding and justification, altogether gratuitous, have had to be improvised to meet the requirements of a shallow and misguided anthropomorphism. To take a typical example, St. Augustine's explanation by way of a scholarly distinction—the world was not created in time but together with time (*cum tempore, non in tempore*)—is more ingenious than convincing. It only circumvents instead of envisaging the real issue. In modern times, however, the issue has been faced fair and square, and nowhere has it been presented with more persuasiveness and force than in the typically modern treatment of the problem by Ulrici, a semi-Hegelian of the last century, in his remarkable book entitled 'God and World' (*Gott und Welt*). "In truth" says the writer "God is not *first* God and *then* creator of the world, but *as* God he is creator of the world, and only *as* creator of the world is he God..... Hence just as God does not *become*

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<sup>1</sup> Pringle-Pattison, 'The Idea of God', p. 276.

creator of the world, so the world too, though not eternal of itself, exists from eternity as the creation (or act) of God."

Such typical utterances bearing on the eternity of the creative act, however illustrative and confirmatory of the standpoint of Śaṅkara with regard to the scriptural texts importing creation (सृष्टिदुतयः), can easily lead us, by reason of contextual emphasis, into misunderstanding the real intention and attitude of Śaṅkara with regard to this much-debated, age-long, cherished creed of theological dogmatics. The very fact that he had a firm grasp of the logical situation underlying the problem of creation and spared no pains to convey that fact in no uncertain terms, that he accepted creation as an eternal act on the part of *Īśvara*, or that he posited an original 'volition' or 'design' (ईक्षा or वीक्षणं) on the part of the Creator effectuating the transition from the undeveloped or inarticulate (अव्याकृत) to the full-fledged, articulate or developed (व्याकृत) world of 'names and forms' does not in the least justify us in supposing that Śaṅkara was in 'bitter earnest' with the theistic position or prepared to accord to the doctrine of creation a central or ultimate significance or view it from the side of the Absolute. That decidedly he was not; and this he has not left us to conjecture or presume from his commitment but has, on the contrary, harped on this theme so often that there can be no room for any misgiving or misrepresentation. In the very context of his exposition of the *soi disant* theistic position of the Advaita-Vedānta, as he warms up to the very heart of his theme and proceeds in a high-pitched key, the whole effect of his teaching, impassioned and edifying as it is, seems to have been neutralised by the chilling blast of his absolutistic prepossessions. Indeed, the note on which this lofty strain is rounded off is not very much unlike the characteristically Kantian 'as if' (*als ob*) which, by giving a finishing touch to an otherwise sublime note, converts it into a bathos. As it is, Śaṅkara reminds us that the scriptural texts importing creation are not to be understood in an ultimate or ontological reference, but as inculcating, on the one hand, the falsity of all judgments and practice concerning the world of names and forms, and, on the other, the essential identity of

Brahman and the world.<sup>1</sup> With added emphasis Śaṅkara further elaborates his contention towards the conclusion of his comments on this topic: "The texts bearing on 'creation' etc. aim at establishing oneness of being. By the analogies of 'clay' and the like, the scriptures demonstrate the reality of one integral Being, Brahman, and the unreality of all transformations thereof and as such can not import creation etc..... Thus from the Śruti texts on creation inculcating the oneness (of Brahman and the world), we realise that Brahman is not to be credited with diverse powers."<sup>2</sup> Thus, it was more or less in the nature of a permissive legislation whereby he suffered the theistic position to retain an *ad interim* efficacy and meaning in the context of an all-engulfing Absolutism with 'its insistence and emphasis on an all-pervasive relativism.' As a conclusive proof—if further proofs were necessary—reference might be made to the crusade he carried on against the hypothesis of an Efficient cause or Lord (पतिः) of the universe in the *Pāśupata* system of theism. It is instructive to note that the same defensive arguments he manipulates in disposing of the charges of inequality, partiality and malice urged against his 'Īśvara' (Vide Com. on V. S. II. i. 35) serve as weapons of offence in his polemics against the *Pāśupata* 'Īśvara' or Lord (Vide Com. on V. S. II. ii. 37). On a closer scrutiny and comparison of the trend of argument pursued in both, it would not be unfair to suspect a double personality in their common author, or a prevarication of judgment in his own behalf, so far as the hypothesis of 'beginninglessness' (अनादित्वं), which affords a way of escape from the alleged 'vicious circle' or 'logical see-saw' (इतरतराश्रयदोषः) in his own case, proves unavailing as a cure of the logical flaw which is eventually pressed against the *Pāśupata* position. In justification of Śaṅkara's way of dealing, rather differently,

1 न चेयं परमार्थविषया सृष्टियुतिः, अविद्याकल्पितानामुपपत्त्यवधारणोपरत्वात् ब्रह्मात्मभावप्रतिपादनपरत्वाच्चेत्येतदपि न प्रकृत्यर्थम्—Com. on V.S. II. i. 33.

2 उत्पत्त्यादियुतीनामपि... एकत्वप्रतिपादनपरत्वात् । सदादिदृष्टानैर्हि सतो ब्रह्मण्येकस्य सत्यत्वं, विकारस्य चानृतत्वं प्रतिपादयच्छास्त्रं नीतुपत्त्यादिपरं भवितुमर्हति ।..... एवमुत्पत्त्यादियुतीनामेकारस्यावगमपरत्वात् नानेकशक्तियोगो ब्रह्मणः ।

with the same problem in the two cases, it may, however, be contended that there is a crucial difference between the *Śaṅkarite* and the *Pāśupata* presentation of the theistic position and that explains or accounts for the differential treatment that is meted out by Śaṅkara in the two cases. According to Śaṅkara self-conscious Brahman or *Īśvara* is both the efficient and the material cause or creator of the world or the manifold through the co-operating condition of *Māyā*, co-eternal with *Īśvara*, but dependent on, or lodged in, Him as a power, neither real nor unreal in its own nature; while, according to the *Pāśupata*, *Īśvara* or the Lord is only the efficient cause or the superintending agency and not the material cause of the world of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*, which has a measure of independence and, as co-eternal with *Īśvara*, limits or finitises Him. In the one case there is an emphatic denial of 'two-ness,' dualism, or even of a relation between God and the world; in the other case there is a *de facto* relationship between God as the efficient cause (निमित्तकारण) or the superintendent (अधिष्ठाता) and the world of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* as the *causa materials* (उपादानकारण) the constitutive factors of the world of individuals. One is a system of Panentheism or Theism proper, while the other, a system of Dualism, or Deism. The externalism of the treatment whereby the *Pāśupata* *Īśvara*—veritably like the Platonic *Demiurge* or the classic *Deus ex machina* or even the Kantian God in the administrative capacity of a grand Paymaster—is forced into relationship with the world of individuals, acts as an 'original sin' and prevents it from enjoying the privilege which the other does, *ceteris paribus*. Although so much is implied in the indictment pressed against the *Pāśupata* system, this vulnerable point has not been brought into prominent relief, and held directly responsible for this comparative disqualification.

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## LECTURE IX.

### ĪŚVARA AS CREATOR AND CREATION AS LĪLĀ ; THE THEISM OF THE VEDĀNTA.

There are thinkers who have sought to make capital out of the doctrine *Līlā* (लीला) as being illustrative of the theism of the Vedānta. But once we track out the so-called theistic view of creation imported by *līlā*, and dissect or analyse it,—which we usually refrain from doing because of its artistic appeal and suggestiveness—we discover it to be the pseudo-logical explanation of creation it is. It merely restates the *fact* of one becoming many, of world-appearance (जगत्प्रपञ्चः), but does not offer any satisfactory solution of the age-long problem as to why the One should be Many—‘this main-miracle,’ as Tenneyson puts it,<sup>1</sup> ‘that thou art thou.’ Verily like *māyā*, it is meant to be, and professedly is, a *description*, and not an *explanation*. For what does it amount to after all? It amounts to saying in so many words that God creates the world, because it is His nature to create. This is supposed to constitute a final and satisfactory answer ; for the tendency to pursue the regress further with an insistent ‘why’—e.g., ‘why is it that God cannot help creating?—has been regarded, by Saṃkara, an illegitimate question (अतिप्रश्नः) and placed under a perpetual ban (न च स्वभावः पर्यनुयोक्तुं शक्यते)<sup>2</sup>. Granted that it is so, the creative activity *quā* activity must be motived or determined by an ‘end’ or ‘purpose’ (प्रयोजनवत्तात् प्रवृत्तीनाम्)<sup>3</sup> and thus it argues back to an imperfection or indigence in a Being who has been invariably represented as eternally satisfied, self-sufficient, or of realised purpose (नित्यदृष्ट, आप्तकाम) in the scriptures—a clear case of incompatible association. Thus Saṃkara

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1 *De Profundis*.

• 2 Com. on V.S. II. 1. xxxiii.

3 Com. on V.S. II. 1. xxxii.

disqualifies 'purpose' as a principle of cosmic teleology on the score of its being, in the words of Prof. Bosanquet, 'a psychological, temporal and ethical idea'<sup>1</sup> and lays down definitely—as Prof. Bosanquet has done, that 'a Teleology cannot be ultimate'—meaning thereby 'the teleology of finite consciousness.' The hypothesis of motivated creation or purpose in an ultimate or cosmic reference being irrelevant or inapplicable, the only other alternatives that remain are, in Śaṅkara's own words, either total suspension of any activity, or random, automatic or unmotivated action (as that of the insane)—which, however, are flatly contradicted by Śruti texts relating to 'creative act' and 'omniscience' of God (नाप्यहन्ति ब्रह्म तत्र प्रहन्ति त्वी । वृष्टिभुतेः सर्वज्ञभुतेषु)<sup>2</sup> Driven to this *impasse*, Śaṅkara escapes between the horns—'motivated' and 'unmotivated'—of the dilemma of the creative act, by postulating a *tertium quid*, the more comprehensive category of *Līlā* or creative spontaneity, and construes it as an explanatory principle of creation. It is interesting to note that Prof. Bosanquet also, subsequent to the period of his Gifford Lectureship, so far veers round as to retract or rather modify his original assertion that 'a teleology cannot be ultimate.' In an instructive symposium on 'Purpose and Mechanism,'<sup>3</sup> Prof. Bosanquet makes the interesting discovery that there is a third category distinct from 'Purpose' and 'Mechanism', from the 'teleology of finite consciousness' on the one hand and 'the teleology below consciousness' on the other, and this may be called the 'teleology above finite consciousness' or 'Providence' or, simply 'Teleology,'<sup>3</sup> provided we take care to divest the term 'teleology' of its finite, temporal incidents before it can be, in any legitimate sense, conceived 'as a character applicable to the universe.' Śaṅkara lays a similar emphasis on the initial need of sublimating this conception of *Līlā* before it can acquire a cosmic signification. It is admittedly one of the highest concepts that can be com-

1 *Principle of Individuality and Value*, p. 217.

2 Com. on V.S. II. 1. xxxiii.

3 Published in the *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 1911-12.

4 *Principle of Individuality and Value*, pp. 145, 153-4.

mandeered from the human end, from the resources of our finite experience ; but, Śaṃkara thinks that the notion of *Līlā* as drawn from our experience, must first be purged of the last vestige of anthropomorphism before it can with any semblance of justification refer to divine creativity.<sup>1</sup> The force of this radical de-anthropomorphizing seems to be whittled down so far as Śaṃkara tries to substantiate his point with reference to a telling example : “Just as inhaling and exhaling etc. go on spontaneously without reference to any extraneous end, so it may well be that God’s activity in the form of mere play or sport realises itself from its very nature without subserving some other end.”<sup>2</sup> It is useless to speculate whether Śaṃkara chose the analogy from organic life advisedly ; but the epithet ‘extraneous’ (वाञ्छा) as occurring in this context raises a strong presumption in favour of an internal or immanent teleology (implicit in the ectype as well as the prototype), which Śaṃkara does not deny, although denying unambiguously the working of an external teleology in both the cases. That he did recognise the operation of a teleology or fulfilment of a need, in an ever so subtle, attenuated or sublimated form, in all cases of *līlā* or ‘play’ that we know or meet with in our experience, is clearly evidenced by his studied refusal to fashion the Divine ‘play’ or ‘*līlā*’ after the human model on that very ground. What is the point, then, of instituting an analogy between the two?—Well, the point is, it will be replied, not the fulfilment of any purpose or end, external or internal, but just this absence of constraint or determination from without or within. Can, in that circumstance, it is to be seriously questioned, the sense of ‘play’ or ‘*līlā*’ itself be maintained, apart from the question of its desirability in a human or even a Divine context? It is no unmeaning paradox but an all-

1 यदि नामलोकं, लीलास्वपि किञ्चित् सूक्ष्मं प्रयोजनम् उत्प्रेक्षेत तथापि नेवात्र किञ्चित् प्रयोजनमुत्प्रेक्षितुं शक्यते आत्मकामयुते:—Com. on V.S. II. 1. xxxiii.

2 यथा चोच्छ्वासश्वासादयोऽनभिसन्धाय वाञ्छां किञ्चित् प्रयोजनान्तरं स्वभावादेव भवन्ति, एवमनृश्वरस्याप्यनपेक्ष्य किञ्चित् प्रयोजनान्तरं स्वभावादेव कैवलं लीलाकृपाप्रवृत्तिर्भवति—loc. cit.



important truth, that a play ceases to be play unless we choose to play in earnest, that is, to abide by the rules of the play, you may either choose to play or not, but once you choose to play, you cannot play in any way you choose. At first sight it may appear to be playing with words only ; or, at most a truism too obvious to need a specific mention. Unfortunately, these truisms which so often pass unacknowledged, and that for well-recognised psychological causes, are none the less true, for the non-recognition of which we have to pay dearly so often. Had it been so readily and universally acknowledged, an Absolutist of the eminence of Bradley would not have cared to dispel the misconceptions and prejudices with which it has been found beset even among the philosophically instructed. To the question : "What is play ?" Bradley makes the initial reply : "It is activity, we may say, so far as that is felt to be unconstrained. Play is thus incompatible with foreign control, and again it is further opposed to earnest...For, wherever I am in earnest, my activity is defined by an end... Play is thus activity spontaneous and agreeable and qualified by the absence of compulsion or earnest."<sup>1</sup> Then he proceeds, by way of delineating strictly the nature of 'play,' to differentiate it from such 'spontaneous' or 'natural activity' as 'we can find everywhere in the young, and we may even imagine it, if we please, as existing in a perfect mind' and, as he lays down conclusively, 'apart from a felt contrast, I could not myself call it an experience of play....Where there is play, felt as play, I shall suppose the more or less remote contrast with a more or less withdrawn earnest. I shall assume the presence of a more or less specified sense of something, more or less pre-eminent or in the background, which is felt as control or limit. Restraint, whether as what is forced on me or as what matters, I shall take therefore as a necessary element implied in play.'<sup>2</sup>

We can hardly ever do justice to Śaṅkara if we construe the creative act (वृत्तिः), conceived as *līlā*, in a purely exclusive

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on Truth and Reality*, pp. 50-1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 51.

or negative reference, following in the wake of the *Śūtrakāra* who has somewhat definitely chalked out the line of all future inquiry into this problem of creation in his cryptic utterances on the point. In order to get at the true sense of *līlā*, we have to place it in the context of all those passages which purport to be explanatory of the Vedāntic theory of creation and elicit from the consensus of these the true philosophic import of *līlā* without allowing ourselves to be influenced by considerations of local value, or stipulating in advance, out of scrupulous regard for objectivity and authenticity, the sense in which it has to be accepted finally. Even from contextual criticism we can gather, if we care to, the sense in which he desires it to be understood; and it is incumbent on everyone, who undertakes the ambitious task of a faithful exegesis on Śaṅkara's pronouncements, to supersede, in strict fairness or fidelity to the great commentator, the letter, the definite commitments, of his commentary in favour of the spirit, the implied meaning, thereof. In the first place, by accentuating the total absence of any constraint or determination exercised by an operative end or purpose in the definition of *līlā*, what Śaṅkara does not mean to imply—which the statement by force of its negative construction may, not unreasonably mean—is a creative spontaneity which is hardly distinguishable from the capricious act of a libertine or the random movements of the insane. Indeed, the meticulous care with which the great Ācāryya expunges all human elements from the conception of *līlā* in order to make it applicable to the Most High whose nature, as an Omniscient (सर्वज्ञः) Being of immeasurable or superhuman power (अपारमितशक्तिः), is altogether incomprehensible and unknown to us (as Sir William Hamilton would also say) has a remarkable affinity to the attempt made by Sir William Hamilton and Dean Mansel towards the close of the last century—an attempt, symptomatic of a syncretist movement, 'to erect religious faith on philosophical scepticism' (as Hume described it with an anticipatory accuracy a century earlier, in his 'Dialogues concerning Natural Religion'), or to exalt, in other words, Authority and Revelation at the expense

of human reason and understanding. Demea, as one of the characters in the 'Dialogues' and the fittest representative of this movement of 'rigid' inflexible orthodoxy, proceeds in this regard on lines very similar to those of Śaṅkara: "Though we piously ascribe to him every species of perfection,...we ought never to imagine that we comprehend the attributes of this divine Being, or to suppose that his perfections have any analogy or likeness to the perfection of a human creature. Wisdom, Thought, Design, Knowledge: these we justly ascribe to him because these words are honourable among men, and we have no other language or other conceptions by which we can express our adoration of him. But let us beware lest we think that our ideas anywise correspond to his perfections, or that his attributes have any resemblance to those qualities among men." This is, indeed, the very same insidious method of argument invariably employed by a section of mystics who, in their horror of the blasphemy of anthropomorphism or anthroposophy backed by a devout zeal to exalt the notion of the Deity or Godhead with 'the cloud of unknowing' on its face, end by defeating their own aim. Having pinned their faith to the *via negativa*, the 'nescio' 'nescio' or even 'n'eti, n'eti' as the exclusive approach to the Supreme Ineffable or the 'Divine Darkness,' they fail to attain their objective because of that 'vaulting ambition Which o'erleaps itself and falls on the other side.' Here, as elsewhere, extremes meet; and it is difficult to see wherein the mystic adoration of the Ineffable differs from the Agnostic's prayer to the *Ignoramus et Ignorabimus* in Fredrick Harrison's classical travesty of it: "Ox! love us, help us, make us one with thee." This underlying similarity between the mystic and the agnostic position does not, however, escape the penetrative insight of David Hume, and Cleanthes, 'the philosophical theist' of the 'Dialogues' makes the pertinent observation: "The Deity, I can readily allow, possesses many powers and attributes of which we can have no comprehension; but if our ideas, so far as they go, be not just and adequate, and correspondent to his real nature, I know not what there is in this subject worth

insisting on. Is the name without any meaning of such mighty importance? Or how do you Mystics, who maintain the absolute incomprehensibility of the Deity, differ from Sceptics or Atheists, who assert that the first cause of all is unknown and unintelligible?’

In thus studiously steering clear of the inevitable anthropomorphism of the religious attitude as specifically indicated by his repudiation of all human analogy from the concept of *līlā*—Śaṅkara seems to have been drawn perilously near the seductive mysticism of a negative variety which, by carrying the process of sublimation beyond a specific point, stultifies its own aim or lands itself in sheer emptiness. But Śaṅkara, be it noted with care, commits no such sublime inconsequence. A sturdy champion of Rationalism, offering nevertheless unstinted allegiance to Revelation, Śaṅkara did not pursue the ruinous policy of exalting the one at the expense of the other. It is a theme too large to be entered upon here ; but none can gainsay the point that the wonderful blend and balance of the two achieved by Śaṅkara and brought to bear on the solution of the specific problems of philosophy is without an historic parallel in the whole range of Indian philosophy—with faint approximations to it only in the systems of Thomas Aquinas or Abelard in the West. As a case in point, it is his innate rationalism that leads to an instinctive preference of a rationally guided activity to a supposedly higher type of totally undetermined activity which is suspiciously similar to the action of the insane. This is the standing vice of all orthodox theology which, in its besotted loyalty to an inflexible orthodoxy, persuades itself that the greater is the interval or disparity between the human and the Divine nature, the more edifying and adorable the Deity is. The same tendency of the human mind lies at the root of that insensate craving for a miracle-working God who as Omnipotent and Omniscient can do the impossible—make or unmake the eternal truths at will, or make evil good and *vice versa* by the issue of arbitrary decrees—overriding all the laws of rationality or morality.

Although appealing to the authority of scriptural texts on

Omniscience of God and no less devoutly entrenched in orthodoxy than the scholastic divines and their latter-day adherents, the philosophical theist in Śaṅkara rises equal to the occasion and abstains from ascribing to the Creator under cover of a preternatural *līlā* an 'unchartered freedom' which 'tires' even man. Can such a freedom redound to the glory of God? That there is some determination in the creative act, conceived as *līlā*, becomes apparent from various committing statements of Śaṅkara bearing on this point. In his commentary (on II. i. 34) in the same context, he clearly reveals the sense in which he understands the 'determination' in question, commensurate with the intrinsic nature of a creative spontaneity imported by *līlā*. In accordance with the general law that a cause without co-operating conditions is unthinkable, or that an unconditioned (being) has no causal efficiency, *Īśvara* also must have been limited or determined in the creation of inequalities (among creatures), the determination in question being provided by the merit and demerit of the creatures about to be created.<sup>1</sup> Does not this admission stultify, it will probably be asked, the emphatic repudiation of any the least constraint exercised by an end in view? At first sight there seems to be a flagrant contradiction here; but it will be readily seen on the application of one of the well-known canons of interpretation improvised for codes of law, civil or religious in Hindu thought—viz., that of general and particular, *sāmānya-vidhi* and *viśeṣa-vidhi*—that there is no incompatibility of meaning in this present case. So construed it will be apparent once for all, and with no mere presumptive validity but with full probative force that by '*prāyojana*' or end in the earlier reference Śaṅkara evidently means an extrinsic end or determination which limits the Creator *ab extra*. The *karma*-seeds, merit and demerit, of creatures do not, however, come within the purview of that general restriction. They constitute the materials (उपादान) in a philosophical sense, of creation,

1 न तु निरपेक्षं निर्मादृतमस्ति। सापेक्षो हीनरो विषयां सृष्टिं निर्दिशतीति।  
क्षिप्तपेक्षत इति चेत्, धर्माधर्मावपेक्षत इति वदामः। अतःसृज्यमानप्राप्तिधर्मापेक्षा विवक्षता  
सृष्टिरिति—Com. on V.S. II. I. xxxiv.

and no other hypothetical, amorphous or mythical matter, and in Śaṅkara's system, Brahman being the efficient (निमित्त) as well as the material cause (उपादानकारण) of the world, and there being no manipulator of an extraneous material co-eternal with him, these merit and demerit may be said to constitute, figuratively speaking, the very being or embodiment of Īśvara. This point has been well elucidated by the *Vedāntaparibhāṣā*: 'Just as there originate differences in the modes of the psychical mechanism, which is the limiting condition of *Jīva*, on account of the contact of the sense-organs with the (empirical) objects, so do arise under stress of the potencies of the *karma* of creatures about to be created modifications or specifications, in the form 'this is now to be created' 'this is now to be maintained in existence' or 'this is now to be destroyed,' in the (primordial) *Māyā* which is the limiting adjunct of the Supreme Lord.'<sup>1</sup> In both the cases, there is, however, no implication of a foreign or external determination. The cognitive relation (as we have already seen in our treatment of the Vedānta Epistemology) does not import any such foreignness in the control exercised by the object on the psychical mechanism; on the contrary, it roundly denies any substantial independence or heterogeneous existence on the part of the object as compared with the conscious subject (अविद्यानसत्तानिरिक्ताया आरूपितसत्ताया अर्णवीकारात्) and affirms substantial or ultimate oneness and unity between the knower and the known (प्रमादसत्तैव षटादिसत्ता). Hence we are perfectly justified in concluding that Śaṅkara repudiates the hypothesis of a foreign determination on the part of Īśvara or Brahman by his dictum of 'reference to the merit and demerit of creatures' (बन्धोद्योगोपेक्षा) in creation. Once we grasp this underlying meaning of Śaṅkara's procedure in this doctrine of creation (सृष्टिः) as *līlā*, not as haphazard or chance creation or arbitrary, undetermined creation, we can hope to appreciate the source of Śaṅkara's inspiration. Nowhere is the peculiar excellence of Śaṅkara's fundamental position—the grandeur

1 यथा विषयिन्द्रियसन्निकर्षादिकारणवशेन जीवोपाध्यन्तःकरणस्य वृत्तिमिदा जायते तथा सूक्ष्मानुप्राणिकर्णवशेन परमेश्वरोपाधिभूतमात्रायाऽवृत्तिविशेषाः 'इदमिदानीं सृष्टव्यम्' 'इदमिदानीं पाख्यितव्यम्' 'इदमिदानीं संवर्तव्यम्' इत्याद्याकारा जायन्ते—प्रथमपरिच्छेदः ।

of a moral idealism or ethical theism—made more manifest than in this striking attitude of his towards the problem of creation. Here, on the one hand, the finality and absoluteness of the claims of morality are respected and, on the other, we have the compatibility of such a standpoint with, and consummation in, the religious point of view together with all its implications—in short, we have, here, in Śaṅkara's doctrine of creation a typical embodiment of Ethical Religion or Theism of which he was perhaps the best representative. On the one hand, he fully vindicates the absoluteness or majesty of the Moral Law, and, on the other, makes it subservient to the Lord or Creator whose supremacy or oneness must at all costs be maintained. The Law of *Karma*, he ever reminds us, is supreme and inexorable ; even God himself must bow down, and pay his homage, unto it. Even the supreme Lord, omnipotent as he is, can not and does not, *make* his creatures virtuous or vicious and therefore happy or unhappy, virtue or merit having the significance, in Śaṅkara as notably in Kant, of 'worthiness to be happy.' Admittedly there are scriptural texts (which have been quoted by Śaṅkara by way of substantiating his own contention) such as these—'this Supreme Being or Lord makes one, whom He means to translate into a higher level of existence, do good deeds while makes one, whom He wishes to degrade, do things that are evil.'<sup>1</sup> As it has been pointed out so often with reference to these quoted texts,—and that not without some semblance of justification—that the Advaita-Vedānta of the strictly Śaṅkarite type stands committed to an unequivocal denial of freedom of the will of man. But more is meant here by the author of these texts as well as by Śaṅkara than is apparent on the surface. The text has been doubtless rather unfortunately worded,—although it was worded with specific reference to the unitary and sole-sufficing causality of the only Being to which the Vedānta stands pledged, and this it admirably achieves. But what it means to set forth

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1 एषश्चेव साधु कर्म कारयति तं यमेभ्यो लोकेभ्य उन्ननीषत एष च क्षेवासाधु कर्म कारयति तं यमघो निनीषते इति—Vide Śaṅkara's Com. on V.S. II. 1. xxxiv.

is not physical coercion or compulsion but moral causation or condition. It implies that this hierarchical gradation of existence—exemplified by the endless diversities or inequalities of our status or station in life—has a moral basis and that ‘morality is of the nature of things.’ It imports further that the distribution of happiness or unhappiness—which is the inevitable sequence to the attainment of a higher or lower grade of existence (लोकः)—in exact proportion to virtue or vice presupposes or postulates a God who effects the adjustment required. This is apparently Kantian out-and-out in conception; but the difference is, as it has been so often pointed out, the very externalism of the treatment whereby the Kantian God, more or less like the *Deus ex machina* of the Deists of the eighteenth century, is introduced into the system as ‘a chief-of-police’ or at best as a Paymaster of the wages of virtue, and not as the author or inspirer of the moral law, immanent, as the very condition of all moral progress and uplift, in the individuals and yet not abrogating their power of free choice and initiation—which is, however, the specific teaching of Advaita-Vedānta, incredible as it may appear at first sight. The introduction of an *Īśvara* or God in the Vedāntic view does not import a breach with, or supersession of the moral point of view; on the contrary, it comes as a positive supplementation or fulfilment of the moral. That such an interpretation of the text in question is not merely a conjectural or presumptive one is at once apparent from Śaṅkara’s own pronouncement in the context in which he cites the text as an answer to the query: ‘What is the authority for the statement that *Īśvara* as conditioned or limited creates this *saṃsāraḥ* or mundane existence with its gradation of good, bad and indifferent or high, low and mediocre?’<sup>1</sup> The whole point of such introduction of God is the guarantee it offers of the co-ordination and interdependence of the natural and the moral order. Thus the natural and the moral realm remain no longer two non-communicating

1 कथं पुनरवगम्यते साधे च ईश्वरो नोचमध्यमोत्तमं संसारं निर्दिशतीति इति

—Cm. on V.S. II. 1. xxxiv.



spheres but are securely grounded once for all in the nature of God who, as an essentially moral being, is the uniting principle of both. So conceived, morality does no longer appear as an excrescence upon, or as an emergent out of, the natural or non-moral world, but strictly as the very 'nature of things'—not, however, in the too catholic sense in which it has been presented by Prof. Alexander in his spatio-temporal scheme of evolution according to which both morality and Deity 'emerge' in time. By being so grounded in the nature of a moral being, the moral realm finally remains no longer parochial in its nature but acquires a cosmic or ontological significance and importance. Thus the introduction of *Īśvara* or God in Śaṅkara's system is *not*, as it is in Kant, of the nature of a baffling addition to an otherwise consistent moral idealism or 'exclusive moralism,' as Prof. Bosanquet styles it, of the Kantian point of view. The 'immense expansion' which the 'moral world' thus gains, according to Śaṅkara, can be described with no loss of meaning, in Martineau's well-known words: "The rule of right, the symmetries of character, the requirements of perfection, are no provincialisms of this planet: they are known among the stars: they reign beyond the Orion and the Southern Cross: they are wherever the universal spirit is."<sup>1</sup> From such a cosmic expansion of the moral, that is, the anthropocentric point of view, Mr. Bertrand Russell would immediately recoil (as he has with pointed emphasis done e.g. in his *'Mysticism and Logic'* and *'Scientific Method in Philosophy'*) as he is convinced that an 'ethically inspired metaphysics' is, after all, bad metaphysics as being fundamentally inconsistent with, or irrelevant to, a wider context—the cosmocentric point of view which is the standpoint of philosophy or what is virtually the same thing, the standpoint of the scientific method. It is instructive to note that Śaṅkara and Russell, representing as they do two radically opposed lines of thinking, converge on this point, so far as they, in full sympathy with the contention of Mysticism as to the relative and practical nature

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<sup>1</sup> *Study of Religion*, Vol. I, p. 26.

of the distinction between good and evil, concur in denying to it a theoretical or constitutive validity from the contemplative point of view. But their respective attitudes towards the problem and function of *Īśvara* or God explain a characteristic difference ; one, convinced of the parochial or practical nature of the distinction, would go the length of hazarding the paradox that 'the elimination of ethical considerations from philosophy is both scientifically necessary and an ethical advance'<sup>1</sup> while the other, rooted in the same conviction, consolidates the moral values as furnishing the surest foundation and the truest keynote of a theistic construction of the world. Starting from the human end *Śaṅkara* follows up steadily this line of graded perfection until it culminates in its very apex, the Divine, as summing up in itself the meaning of the whole creation.

On the other hand, *Śaṅkara* has not, it should be carefully noted, construed the immanence of the Divine—to which his metaphysical or absolutistic predilections commit him—in such a way as to jeopardise or stultify the indispensable transcendence of the Divine in the interests of morality. Such an unethical relation between the human and the Divine is foreign to *Śaṅkara*'s whole way of thinking. The immanence in question which is a natural sequel to his absolute monism, does in no sense render human agency or creativity superfluous or illusory. We are no mere Divine automata or mere conduit-pipes for the transmission of the Divine energy and agency. We are active, free, creative agents in a very real sense ; we are no more passive spectators in the world-drama but co-operate, on equal terms, with God, as our co-operator in this drama of creation. It is no mere quasi-theistic concession but a full, frank and ungrudging recognition, on *Śaṅkara*'s part, of the *de facto* individuality, freedom and independence of created beings. If, as some theistic writers have rightly contended, 'unless creators are created, nothing is really created,' then *Śaṅkara* has made provision for 'creation' in his system.

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<sup>1</sup> *Mysticism and Logic and Other Essays.*

According to Śaṅkara, we are creators—architects of our own moral and spiritual fortune and the arbiter of our final destiny ; we *are* efficient causes—even if it be in a secondary sense—‘second causes’ in relation to God who is the First Cause. We, as creators or ‘second causes,’ are created in a sense and in another sense not created, as Śaṅkara would have it in his doctrine of creation. We can do no better than allow Śaṅkara himself to present his own case—which he does so admirably and succinctly by means of a telling example thus: “Īśvara, however, is to be conceived as a showering cloud. Just as the showering cloud serves, in the matter of fructifying (or raising a crop of) corn or wheat etc., as the common co-operating, invariable condition, while the uncommon, varying specific potencies peculiar to their respective ‘seed-forms’ function causally in respect of the resulting differences in the form of corn and wheat, so does *Īśvara* or God serve as the universally concomitant, unvarying condition in the creation of human beings and deities, while the specific *totum* of *karma* (which is the true *principium individuationis* according to Śaṅkara) unique of its kind and peculiar to each of these, functions in the capacity of a cause with regard to the eventual differentiation of human beings and deities.”<sup>1</sup> No more lucidly could one express the solution of an age-long and knotty problem of mighty importance—a problem on which vital issues of ethics and theology are staked—and no more profound solution could be given commensurate with the needs of morality and religion. Such a solution irresistibly recalls a kindred one given by Martineau in his characteristic epigrammatic style: “God is the author of our possibilities: we are the authors of our actualities.” It clearly implies a delimitation of the Divine power or causality in the interests of human freedom and moral education. Such a limitation does not, however, argue

1 ईश्वरस्य पञ्चम्यत् द्रष्टव्यः । यथा हि पञ्चम्यो ब्रीहियवादिष्वृष्टौ साधारणं कारणं भवति, ब्रीहियवादिष्वेव तु तत्तद्विभक्त्यान्वेषासाधारणानि सैक्यमर्थानि, कारणानि भवन्ति । एवमनन्तरो देवमनुष्यादिष्वृष्टौ साधारणं कारणं भवति, देवमनुष्यादिष्वेव तु तत्तद्विभक्त्यान्वेषासाधारणानि सैक्यमर्थानि कारणानि भवन्ति—Com. on V.S. II. 1. xxiv.

to the presence of a superior or rival power coping with it and imposing this limitation *ab extra* but it is essentially a 'self-imposed limitation.' This limitation, Śaṅkara frankly acknowledges, does in no way detract from the so-called 'omnipotence' with which orthodox theology invariably invests its God ; and, moreover, an omnipotence which does not respect or safeguard the interests of morality does neither exalt the notion of Deity, nor redound to the credit of a rational theology. Not, unreasonably, therefore, has Cleanthes, 'the philosophical theist' in Hume's 'Dialogues,' confessed that he has 'been apt to suspect the frequent repetition of the word *infinite*, which we meet with in all theological writers, to savour more of panegyric than of philosophy, and that any purposes of reasoning, and even of religion would be better served, were we to rest contented with more accurate and more moderate expressions.' In this standing issue between Revelationism and Rationalism, between 'inflexible orthodoxy, and 'philosophical theism' between Authority and freethinking, Śaṅkara has, in this very doctrine of creation, shown the way to the attainment of a much-needed balance, and adjustment of their rights satisfactory to the demands of the moral and the religious life.

Such are the implications of that element of 'determination' (सापेक्षत्वं) operative in the creative act (सृष्टिः) conceived as *līlā* (लीला) or play—which is absolutely undetermined by an extraneous end but is, on the other hand, essentially self-sufficient and self-determined. Thus there is no incompatibility in Śaṅkara's admission of 'न प्रयोजनवत्त्वात्' along with 'सापेक्षत्वात्'—'not conditioned or determined by an (external) end' and yet conditioned or determined by an (internal) end and not indeterminate or unconditional—with reference to the creation of *Īśvara*. Such is the case with two outstanding thinkers in the West, Spinoza and Kant. Spinoza, as we all know, is emphatic in his denial of teleology to God, on the ground of its being human, all too human. The ascription of purpose or end in a metaphysical or cosmic reference to God clearly implies an indigence or imperfection in a Being that is, *ex hypothesi*, all-perfect, (*ens perfectissimum*). Hence in the historical antithesis of

mechanism and teleology, Spinoza appears as a staunch supporter of mechanism or mechanical and geometrical necessity. But that is not the last word of Spinoza's philosophy, as has been so often pointed out by veterans in Spinoza scholarship. Spinoza's denials in this reference have really been found to be more often sinned against than sinning. He does indeed deny both *intellectus* and *voluntas* to God. "If intellect belongs to the Divine nature" as he puts it, "it cannot be, like ours, posterior to the objects understood, or simultaneous with them, since God is the antecedent case of them all"—anticipating fully the famous antithesis which Immanuel Kant was led to draw between our understanding which is discursive and the problematic, intuitive, or creative understanding (*intellectus archetypus*) of God. In other words, when he denies *intellectus* to God, 'it is the schematic and partial knowledge of things from the outside, the knowledge which proceeds by the piecing together of parts and the inferring of the unknown from the known, that is unequivocally and justly repudiated. Similarly, the steady refusal to ascribe on '*absoluta voluntas*' to God in Spinoza is characteristic of his sustained polemic against 'abstract' or 'false universals'—a polemic which is much more thorough-going and philosophical than Berkeley's controversy over 'abstract ideas' and more akin to the Hegelian criticism of the same. The denial in question alludes to an abstract contentless will—an absolutely indeterminate freedom of choice which is no less derogatory to the notion of the Divine than that of a compelling *vis a tergo*. But mechanism, as we have already observed, is a note altogether alien to the high-pitched key, that edifying and passionate strain of '*amor intellectualis Dei*,' '*Acquiescentia*,' and '*Beatitudo*' upon which he closes the '*Ethica*.' It is a strange ruling which abides by the initial statement of Spinoza's own position, and refuses to check and evaluate it in the light of the whole as expressed in the closing note of '*acquiescentia*' which is only "the human echo of the verdict put into the mouth of the divine Labourer—'And God, saw everything that he had made, and behold it was very

good'.<sup>1</sup> In short, the idealistic superstructure that was raised on a crude naturalistic foundation is not only the coping-stone of the Spinozistic system as a whole but furnishes the key to the interpretation of the whole. It is only a perverted fidelity or consistency which constantly appeals to the foundation in its understanding of the edifice that is built thereon. However, even admitting that the issue between Mechanism and Teleology in Spinoza is a dubious one, there is no room for misgivings that, in Spinoza's opinion at least, the denial of an external, anthropo-centric teleology fully squares with an admission of an internal teleology, the idea of a self-realising system, in reference to the standing problem of creation. Similarly, Kant in pronounced opposition to the old version of the Teleological argument for God's existence or the Argument from Design, laid down the proposition that 'this arrangement of means and ends is entirely foreign to the things existing in the world—it belongs to them as a contingent attribute.' Adaptation there is in the world, but not necessarily Design ; for Design implies choice and evidences are wanting for making out a case for 'chosen adaptation.' The adaptation which the world exhibits might, for aught we know, be due to certain mechanical forces shuffling into equilibrium. Such was the vein in which Lotze argued later. But Kant would denominate these alleged cases of 'design' as adaptations to external ends (*äussere Zweckmässigkeit*), and insist upon their supreme irrelevance in a theistic regard. While refusing to subscribe to the old form of the Teleological argument and to believe in its efficiency in establishing the notion of an all-designing, benevolent God, Kant does recognise in his *Critique of Judgment* a true type of teleology or what he calls adaptation to internal ends (*innere Zweckmässigkeit*), exhibited by the organic creation as a whole, and herein he was too often tempted to construe this category of 'internal teleology' as a principle of cosmic teleology in a constitutive or metaphysical reference, in spite of the initial warning or safeguard he had provided for (at the close of his

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<sup>1</sup> Pringle-Pattison, *Idea of God*, p. 333.

Critique of Pure Reason)—by regarding ‘the systematic unity of nature’ conceived as ‘complete teleological unity’ (*Vollständige Zweckmässige Einheit*) to be only a heuristic or regulative principle ‘of hypothetical validity.’ Here the same ‘critical circumspection indicated by his characteristic ‘as if’ leads him ‘to regard all order in the world as if it originated from the intention and design of a supreme reason’ with the added proviso that ‘the agency of a Supreme Being is not to be invoked by a species of *ignava ratio* to explain *particular* phenomena, instead of investigating their causes in the general mechanism of matter,’ so that in the end, ‘when we have discovered such a unity it should be perfectly indifferent whether we say God has wisely willed it so or nature has wisely arranged this.’ This wavering and vacillating attitude seems to have given way to an abiding outlook upon the world as a whole, when in the *Critique of Judgment* he attains to an altogether new set of categories in the æsthetic judgment of the Beautiful whereof the essence consists in a ‘purposiveness without a purpose.’ Here from this vantage-ground, the category of ‘purposiveness without a purpose’ conjoined to the problematic concept of ‘an intuitive understanding’ might conceivably offer a re-interpretation of the Kantian attitude towards the theistic problem, which could compare, not unfavourably, with the conception of *līlā*.

In the light of the foregoing discussion it will readily appear that we can in full consonance with the spirit of Śaṅkara’s utterances on the problem of creation, assert without exposing ourselves to a *contradictio in adjecto* that *Īśvara* or God “creates out of the abundance of his joy and for the fulfilment of the demands of morality. By looking upon creation as a cosmic game in which the Supreme indulges, Śaṅkara brings out the purposiveness, rationality, ease and effortlessness with which the creation is sustained.”<sup>1</sup> But, as in Kant, the metaphysical predilections of Śaṅkara are ere long brought to bear on this position, and the theistic superstructure

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<sup>1</sup> Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 551.

that had been so laboriously and rationalistically built up on the foundational hypothesis of a *līlā* on the part of the Creator, is relentlessly levelled to the ground by the smashing criticism that these theistic texts are not to be understood in an absolute or metaphysical sense (न चैवं परमार्थविषया सृष्टिश्रुतिः)<sup>1</sup>. Is not this, the critic will probably urge, tantamount to a Sisyphean labour, hardly worthy of the vocation of an earnest philosophic thinker? 'But how far,' Śaṅkara would perhaps reply in defence, 'have you, philosophical theists, succeeded, starting from the human end, in dictating terms to, or legislating for, the whole? What, after all, do your explanations or assumptions amount to? Are you not simply indulging in figurative expressions when faced with ultimate issues? What is the net value of the hypothesis or assumption, for example, that the *karmas* of individuals about to be created are, as constitutive materials (उपादान) of creation, *in* God (who alone is the *causa materialis*) and yet not *in* Him—in the sense of being not due to, or owned by Him? Is it not simply a cloak for our ignorance of the ultimate question as to the relation between the Creator and the created? Has any other explanation in this regard fared any better? Why not frankly acknowledge, then, that the immanence of the Divine or the so-called Creator in his creation, or the Absolute in the individuals, is an ultimate mystery and as such incapable of a rational explanation—a position which has been ratified alike by *Śruti* and *Smṛtis*? Why not confess roundly your ignorance and subscribe to the wisdom expressed in the lines?—

‘अचिन्त्यैः खलु ये भावा न तावद्वैषं योजयेत् ।

प्रकृतित्थः परं यच्च तदचिन्त्यस्य लक्षणम् ॥’

Indeed, *līlā* is, after all, an euphemism for ignorance of the ultimate question—*how* one can be many. All so-called theories of creation, when tracked out carefully, are found to have come to the end of their tether, and to a frank confession of an *ignoramus*. These are always making the preposterous attempt

<sup>1</sup> Conf. on V.S. II. I. xxxiv.



of instructing the Deity' in 'the art of world-making', as Hume aptly called it, or trying to be in the confidence of the Almighty so as to be able to pronounce the verdict as to whether the creation is to be viewed as 'a cosmic game' or *līlā*, or, as the fulfilment of a need on the part of God or the Creator. The essential mystery of the fact—of the relation of the Absolute and the Finite individuals—is the theme on which Western philosophers, who have tried to envisage the problem by means of reason only, have so often harped. 'Our business,' says Lotze, 'is not to make the world, but to understand the inner connexion of the world that is realized already, and it was this problem that forced us to lay down our limiting idea of the Absolute and its inner creation of countless finite beings. This idea we found it necessary to regard as the conception of an ultimate fact.'<sup>1</sup> No less sincere is Prof. Pringle-Pattison in his confession of this philosophic nescience: "It is, in the very nature of the case, impossible that we should *understand* the relation (if one may even use such a finite term as relation) between a creative Spirit and its creatures, whether as regards the independence conferred or the mode in which the life-history of the finite being still remains part of the infinite experience.....for to do so would be to transcend the conditions of our own individuality, to get, as it were, behind the conditions of finite existence and actually repeat the process of creation and realise the absolute experience. Accordingly, when we do try to schematize the fact for ourselves, we either eliminate the characteristics of self-hood by making the individual simply a vehicle of transmission or, on ~~the~~ the other hand, we lose hold of the creative unity altogether by treating the individuals as independent, 'self-subsistent units.'<sup>2</sup> These two extracts have been quoted *in extenso* as being typical of an enlightened or philosophic agnosticism which acts as a whole-some anti-dote to Hegelian gnosticism. But both seem to have departed from this salutary principle which they elect to abide

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<sup>1</sup> *Metaphysics*, sec. 246.

<sup>2</sup> *Idea of God*, p. 293.

by, so far as they both justify the notion of creation 'from the side of the Absolute,' as Bosanquet would say, so far as God or the Absolute is regarded as a 'self-communicating holiness' or 'self-imparting blessedness,' or more philosophically, as Love. "The idea of end or purpose" as Prof. Pringle-Pattison admits in the end,<sup>1</sup> "may not be literally applicable in such sphere, but we may at least say that just 'from the side of the Absolute' the meaning of the finite process must lie in a creation of a world of individual spirits; for to such alone can He reveal himself, and from them receive the answering tribute of love and adoration." But as a staunch Absolutist, Śaṃkara would demur to the ultimate theoretical validity of the notion of a Being that receives 'the answering tribute of love and adoration.' The Absolute as eternally realised is beyond the reach of even the highest category of the *dvaita*, and has no need of a world of created beings. Even Hegel than whom there has been scarcely a more ardent advocate of the need of creation for the self-realisation, admittedly eternal, of the Absolute, has been not infrequently betrayed, in spite of himself, into the language of Śaṃkara's *līlā*. In his 'Philosophy of Religion,' for example, Hegel distinctly speaks of the Absolute Life as the eternal play of love with itself. In a much more revealing passage of the '*Encyclopædia*' Hegel proceeds to observe: "Within the range of the finite we can never see or experience that the End has been really secured. The consummation of the infinite End, therefore, consists merely in removing the illusion which makes it seem yet unaccomplished. The Good, the absolutely Good, is eternally accomplishing itself in the world, and the result is that it needs not wait upon us, but is already by implication, as well as in full actuality, accomplished. This is the illusion under which we live. It alone supplies at the same time the actualizing force on which the interest in the world depends. In the course of its process, the Idea creates that illusion by setting an antithesis to confront itself, and its action consists

<sup>1</sup> *Idea of God*, p. 295.

in getting rid of the illusion which it has created."<sup>1</sup> There could be no more faithful exegesis on the standpoint of Śaṅkara than what has been furnished by Hegel in this luminous paragraph, and its authority is so much the greater because it does not directly profess that aim. It presents in a synoptic view the main springs of the Śaṅkara-Vedānta—the doctrine of *adhyāsa*, *līlā*, *māyā* and the two complementary notions of *prāptaprāptih* (प्राप्तप्राप्तिः) and *parihṛtaparihārah* (परिहृतपरिहारः). In point of fact there is point-to-point correspondence between Śaṅkara and Hegel here: the word “*Täuschung*” repeatedly used by Hegel in this context is an exact counterpart of Śaṅkara’s *māyā*, *avidyā*, or *adhyāsaḥ* and *adhyāsaḥ* or *avidyā* has profound functional similarity with the ‘*Täuschung*’ of Hegel, which both regard as the beneficent source of our interest in the world with all its practical usages. So far as Hegel is concerned, this passage, remarkable as it is, is strangely at variance with the main drift of his thought. It is on account of the intrusion of time-perspective that he has not been able to sustain consistently his view of the absolutely good as ‘eternally accomplishing itself in the world.’\* The true import of Hegel’s philosophy is to be recovered from what he so often tells us viz. that the Christian, that is to say, in his view, the final, religious, idea of God is that of the self-revealing, or self-imparting God. Such is, indeed, the underlying significance of Brahman, conceived as *Ānanda* (आनन्दः) that necessarily goes out of itself into an Other and reveals or fulfils itself therein, for it is the very nature of *ānandaḥ* (आनन्दः) to reveal itself—आनन्दप्रकाशयोरनन्दि<sup>2</sup> as Vācaspati

<sup>1</sup> Section 212 (Wallace’s translation p. 352).

\* Śaṅkara never faltered in this view of creation as eternally realising itself. Creation is not conceived as something accomplished in the past; it is, in other words, not a *fact* but an *act* continuous and perpetual. In his own words, ‘the end of realising itself in the many (on the part of the One) is not yet fulfilled’ (तदेव बहुभवनं प्रयोजनं नाद्यापि निवृत्तम्)—Com. on *Chānd.* 6. 3. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Vide *Bhāmati* on I. i. 1. of *Śaṅkara-Bhāṣya on the Vedānta Sūtras*.

Miśra truly observes in this regard. The Supreme Being, the *ens realissimum* or *ens perfectissimum*—*id quo majus Cogitari nequit* of Scholastic theology which has its counterpart in Vedāntic *Brahman*, as evidenced also by the derivative meaning of the word—is at the same time the Supreme Intelligence (बुद्धः), as the Vedānta fully accepts on the authority of the Śruti text, characterising the Supreme Being as eternally unconditioned or pure, conscious and free (नित्यबुद्धबुद्धमुक्तस्वभावः). The epithet '*buddha*' (बुद्ध), as Vācaspati Miśra further elucidates it in the *Bhṛṅmalī*, has specific reference to the unconditioned or independent manifestation or self-revealing nature of *Ātman* as *Ānanda* (बुद्धेत्यपराधीनप्रकाशमानानन्दान् दर्शयति). It is in this concept of *ānanda* as the supreme principle and essence of *Ātman* that all subsequent developments of the Vedāntic theory of creation are anticipated and summed up. It is doubtless in the later schools of Vedāntism, with a pronounced theistic bias, that the doctrine of *līlā* figures, no longer as a cloak for ignorance, or as the negation of external teleology, but as the positive principle of self-realisation or self-expression which has its sole *raison d'être* in the attainment of bliss. Rāmānuja, for example, thinks that the ascription of an end to the Creator is unimpeachable, so far as the 'end' in question is no other than *līlā* or creative spontaneity, which is so called on account of the creation, maintenance and dissolution of the world being accomplished exclusively by the volition of the Creator.<sup>1</sup> Vallabhācāryya, however, emphasises the element of 'self-determination' or freedom from constraint in the creative activity of the Lord, conceived as a mere sport or play on His part (भगवान् स्वक्रीडार्थमेव जगद्वदेषाविर्भूय क्रीडतीति वेदिकैर्निर्णीयते). Now, the essence of play-consciousness or Divine sport (लीला) is freedom from the operation of any end or purpose whatsoever: it is its own end (न हि लीलायां किञ्चित्प्रयोजनमस्ति। लीलाया एव प्रयोजनत्वात्). This trend of thought is carried a step further by Valadeva in his *Govindābhāṣya* on the *Brahmasūtras*,<sup>2</sup> who contends that *līlā* is but the

1 स्वसंकल्पमात्रावच्छिन्नजगज्जन्मस्थितिर्वासादीर्णैव प्रयोजनमिति निरवयम्

—Sribhāṣyam.

2 II. I. xxxiii.

activity of a Being, albeit self-sufficient and perfect, towards multiform creation, and is not conditioned by any motive of self-interest.....accordingly, *līlā* is only of the very nature of the essential *ānanda* or joy of the Being.<sup>1</sup> Thus in this last version of *līlā*, it appears as being perfectly in tune with, and a logical carrying out of, the celebrated Upanishad text that creation proceeds from the fulness of the joy of the Creator, or *Ānanda* as the supreme creative principle itself (आनन्दोऽयं खल्विदमनि सृजति जगन्ते).

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1 परिपूर्णस्यापि विशिष्टसृष्टौ प्रवृत्तिर्लौकिकेव केवला ननु स्वभवाभिसंधिपूर्विका...तस्मात् स्ववपानन्दस्वाभाविकेव लीला ।

## LECTURE X

### *JIVA* AND *JAGAT*: INDIVIDUAL AND THE WORLD.

The central truth enshrined in the heart of the doctrine of Creation is the fact of individuation. From time immemorial, in the East and in the West, the same insistent 'Why?—Why is there any world at all?' has been pressed by professional philosophers and the lay preachers alike, and all have, like the inquisitive youth in Omar Khayyam, come out by the same door by which they entered the temple of the wise—confessedly none the wiser. 'Why should,' asks William James,<sup>1</sup> "the Absolute ever have lapsed from the perfection of its own integral experience and refracted itself into all our finite experiences?" It is, in his opinion, an insuperable *impasse* before which all absolutism is hauled up, so far as it fails to explain why 'the static timeless perfect Absolute' should have passed out of 'the stagnant felicity' of the absolute novel-reader into the *Sturm und Drang* experienced by those that participate in the 'arduousness' of the cosmic drama. Beginning with the admission that "that experience should take place in finite centres, and should wear the form of finite 'thisness,' is in the end inexplicable," Bradley leaves off with the concluding reflection: 'We do not know why or how the Absolute divides itself into centres, or the way in which, so divided, it still remains one.'<sup>2</sup> In the same strain Bosanquet broaches the inevitable question: 'why the finite world exists' which he, however, dismisses with the pointed remark that 'we cannot expect to give a reason for the scheme of the universe.' There have been philosophers, especially of a theistic persuasion, who are not prepared to take leave of this fascinating topic with a sense of a baffling mystery which, however ennobling or edifying, has

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<sup>1</sup> *A Pluralistic Universe*, p. 120.

<sup>2</sup> *Appearance and Reality*, pp. 226, 527.

the inevitable effect, they think, of sterilising the philosophic impulse or, at best, paralysing it at its very inception. Lotze, for example, imbued with a laudable enthusiasm and spirit of enterprise, has the hardihood to face this most obstinate of 'the riddles of the Sphinx', and, if need be, even to pry into the secret of the Divine nature and try to encompass them from within. If 'God did not create the world and then leave it alone' but 'maintains the world after creating it' by means of a perpetual creation or a continuance of his Divine authority,—if in short, the world be eternally part and parcel of the Divine nature—what, as he significantly asks, does such 'a world gain by being created?' To this pertinent question as to the inner meaning of creation, Lotze gives the following answer: 'God permitted the thought which at first was only His own to become the thought of other spirits; or He caused this world of spirits to arise in which His continual influence and operation causes His own cosmic thoughts to arise and figure as the appearance of an outer world surrounding them and capable of being perceived by them,'<sup>1</sup> and concludes with the characteristic dictum that 'creation is of spirits and of spirits alone.'<sup>2</sup> 'God's motive in creating the world' is 'the expansive love which urges Him to communicate His holiness to other beings'—in short 'to multiply His own holiness in us.'<sup>3</sup> Although an admirer of Lotze, Bosanquet would at once take exception to the phrase 'creation of creators' which he denounces as a mere self-contradiction. But it is unfortunate that Bosanquet should have understood the term 'Creator' in a literal and absolute sense. The finite individual is, in a sense, self-created by its own action; in another sense it has come to be what it is because of the pressure of the whole universe or system of things at that focal point. The origin of such finite centres, with some measure of otherness and independence, is exactly what is sought to be conveyed by so apparently enigmatical and epigrammatic

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<sup>1</sup> *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 91-2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 91.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

a phrase as 'creation of creators.' We have already seen how Śaṅkara responded in a similar situation and met the requirements of underivative self-hood collaterally with those of creative unity in his own construction of the relation between the Creator and the created beings endowed *ab initio* with free initiative and agency. But Śaṅkara himself did not make much of that explanation ; for it was a mere statement of the fact of individuation. Śaṅkara, however, would not go so far as to read a motive into the creative activity of the Lord—no matter whether it be the motive of 'compassion' or of 'multiplying holiness in us'—on pain of making it 'teleological' in the ordinary sense. He modestly disclaims any intention of prying into the secrets of the Divine Life, and invokes the category of 'purposiveness without a purpose' or the æsthetico-teleological conception of *līlā*, which, though not self-explanatory or satisfactory as a principle of philosophic explanation, can aspire to that rank so far as it is read in the context of the Divine nature as *Ānanda*, for it is only *ānanda* which is essentially self-communicative and self-revealing. Creation proceeds out of the abundance of the joy of the Creator. But the end of creation cannot be an abstract or universal bliss anterior to concrete and specific forms of blessedness and joy. Every form of bliss or *ānanda* is *ipso facto* concrete and individual. An abstract blessedness or joy, 'moving about in a world not realised,' is a contradiction in terms. Each individual is an object of a unique, specific interest for the Creator, and as such infinite and eternal. Just as the poet<sup>1</sup> says:—

"If eyes were made for seeing

Then beauty is its own excuse for being,"—

so the Vedāntic teacher, emulating 'the sweet reasonableness' of the poet, might argue that if Brahman or the Creator were strictly to be conceived as of the very stuff of '*Ānanda*', then the world of *Jīvas* as affording the richly diversified enjoyment of such a Being has its own *raison d'être*. 'God tastes an infinite

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<sup>1</sup> Emerson, *The Rhodora*.



joy. In infinite ways,' says<sup>1</sup> Browning ; all created beings are the living 'embodiments, or incarnations of the blessedness or *ānanda* of the Creator, affirms Śaṅkara following in the footsteps of the *Śruti* texts that are so often quoted : "तस्यैवानन्दस्य एकेकमात्रमुपजीवन्ति" or "आनन्दाद्देव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते आनन्देन जातानि जीवन्ति आनन्दं प्रयज्यमिदं विभज्यन्ति" "it is verily from *Ānanda*, that all these creatures originate, it is as *ānanda-begotten* that they live and move and have their being (in *ānanda*) and it is unto *ānanda* that they re-enter and disappear." But there is just the danger of misinterpreting the nature of this original *Ānanda*. "We must not suppose" as Lotze has so well and convincingly put it, "that it lies in the abstract form in the mind as an end forethought to be made real in the world..... Every real pleasure is different from every other, just as one colour is different from another... so, whenever we really feel pleasure, we but recognise and 'enjoy a peculiar specific value, attaching to *its* stimulus and to no other. Pleasure in general, on the other hand, answers to the colour which never exists as such. We must not then assume that in God there first exists an idea of pleasure as yet 'general and formless, and that He subsequently looks for forms through which to realise it. Without separation or loss of unity the Divine activity issues in an inexhaustible wealth of forms, which to us, when in our reflection we compare them, appear to have been calculated for this presupposed end of universal pleasure, whereas in fact each of them directly and of itself represents a special value, which is for God Himself an object of peculiar and definite pleasurable-ness, and affects ourselves with a feeling which is a more or less remote copy of His."<sup>2</sup> Thus it is substantiated that God or the Creator as *ānanda* is co-eval and co-eternal with a world of finite individuals or created beings.

While postulating a creative unity in this concept of *ānanda* (which, it is to be noted by the way, fulfils the æsthetico-teleological need of an intensification or multiplication of the

<sup>1</sup> 'Paracelsus'.

<sup>2</sup> *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 124-5.

original bliss,<sup>1</sup> Śaṅkara never loses sight of gradations of value accounting for gradations in existence in the creative or individuating principle which is essentially unitary in nature • in his recognition of चित्तवृत्तियम् or अभिव्यक्तिवृत्तियम्. Now, what is, according to Śaṅkara, the criterion or principle of individuality, which is constitutive of a graded hierarchy in creation? It is not, in the first place, the logical principle of non-contradiction—or what is the same thing—of inclusiveness and harmony, as in Bradley and Bosanquet in particular. It is, to say the least of it, a merely formal principle, hardly different from bare tautology. The very fact that a thing exists bears testimony to the internal harmony it presupposes—without which it would have no title to exist. Śaṅkara, however, lays unmistakable emphasis on the concrete fact of individuality, on the total existence of living centres of experience. Strictly speaking, it is by an abuse of language that the term value is often extended to purely unconscious facts, either collectively or distributively. Nature, as Kant argued long ago, otherwise regarded as a machine, receives the name of a 'realm' or 'kingdom' only when viewed in relation to rational beings as its ends. It acquires in that context a unity which otherwise does not belong to it. It belongs to the whole as an element in a self-supporting system. All values, therefore, are necessarily conscious values. The dumb, mute, strivings of nature below the threshold of consciousness find an articulate expression in finite centres of experience which are, as it were, so many focal points at which the vast externality of nature is gathered up and internalized. Lotze in an impassioned utterance of his in his '*Mikrokosmos*' proceeds, by way of his strictures on cognition conceived as a 'barren rehearsal' of a finished reality, to observe: "The beauty of colours and tones, warmth and fragrance, are what Nature in itself strives to produce and express, but cannot do so by itself; for this it needs as its last and noblest instrument the sentient mind, which alone can put into words its mute striving and, in the glory of sentient

१ तदेव ब्रह्मवर्णं प्रयोजनं नाद्यापि निवृत्तं—*Chāndogya Upanishad*, iv. iii. 2.

intuition, set forth in luminous actuality what all the motions and gestures of the external world were vainly endeavouring to express.<sup>1</sup> This is what Prof. Pringle-Pattison seeks to convey by the phrase, 'man as organic to the world.'<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to note that Śaṅkara anticipated this description of *jīvas* or individuals furnished with the sense-organs that reveal the presence of secondary qualities in the objective world. "The *Śruti* holds" as Śaṅkara elaborates the point in his commentary on the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upanishad*,<sup>3</sup> 'the sense-organ to be kindred, homogeneous or continuous with the objects and not heterogeneous thereto i.e. a genus by itself. The sense-organ is only a different collocation of the object meant or designed for the recognition of its own nature.....verily like a lamp.'" It is this all-round living experience,—in which, as Bosanquet puts it so happily, a particular content of externality 'comes alive'—steeped in feeling and throbbing with activity, that, after all, counts in the principle of individuation or creation. This is the meaning of individuality which Śaṅkara has in view when he remarks, with pointed reference to his thesis of a 'steadily increasing manifestation of knowledge and power' 'of a transcendent principle of unity' that it comes about through gradations (of excellence) in the psychical apparatus or the faculty of memory (which is the true principle of internality).<sup>3</sup> It is, then, the *chitta* which is, according to Śaṅkara, the true *principium individuationis*; for, as he further expounds the doctrine, 'wherever we have *Rasa* (रसः) *chitta* is there presupposed (as an operative agency); and wherever we have *chitta*, there is inferred, by reason of the communicative expansion (or sympathetic thrill) of such *rasa*,

1 Bk. III. Chap. iv.

2 विषयानुसमानजातीयं करणं मन्वते भुक्तिर्न जात्यन्तरम् । पिबत्यस्यैव स्वात्मयादृक्त्वेन संस्वामान्तरं करणं नाम.....प्रक्षीपवत्—II. iv. II.

3 एकस्यापि कूटस्थस्य चित्ततारतम्यात् ज्ञानमुखेनैवार्थाभिमित्यक्तिः परेषु परेषु चत्तरोत्तरं भवसी भवति ।

the fact of individuation.<sup>1</sup> This very statement, at once revealing and far-reaching in its significance, when read in the context of the scriptural text, no less illuminating on the point,—that the Supreme Being or God is verily *Ānanda* or *Rasa* (a term which is far more comprehensive), and having evoked or elicited this *rasa*, He realises *ānanda* or enjoys His own being (रसो वै सः । रसं ह्यवायं लब्ध्वा नन्दी भवति),—gives us the pivotal principle of creation as conceived by Advaita-Vedānta. Exception might be taken, however, to this presentation of Advaita-Vedānta, as being suspiciously similar to the Christian conception of God as Love and, therefore, flagrantly 'unorthodox'—presumably an interpolation made by well-meaning apologists. Even admitting for argument's sake that there was direct and conscious borrowing here, then there would be still sufficient excuse for it in as much as it has been made much better by such borrowing, and wrought so marvellously into the structure of the Advaita-Vedānta. Whatever explanation we may offer, it is there, and let us leave it at that.

In spite of a full and frank recognition of the *de facto* claims of individuality in a philosophical reference, there is no denying the fact that there are, copious other passages in Śaṅkara-Vedānta that tend to discount the importance thereof. As a proof of Śaṅkara's *bona fides*, reference might be made to the fundamental distinction he draws (e.g. in his commentary on II. ii. 17) between '*swarupa*' (स्वरूपः) and '*sambandhirupa*' (सम्बन्धिरूपः) of a finite individual, fortified by a clear enunciation or definition. "Verily, that being which is not dependent or conditional on some other being, is the very essence or individuality of a being. What is, however, dependent on an Other is not the essence or individuality—for the simple reason of its extinction on the disappearance of that Other."<sup>2</sup> If we may, in the light of this outspoken utterance of Śaṅkara, we

1 यत्र रससत्त्वं चित्तमनुमीयते । यत्र चित्तं तत्र रससञ्चालनादिना जीवसङ्गात् अनुमीयते

2 यद्विग्रहस्य न अन्यपि च स्वरूपं, तत् तस्य तत्त्वं ; यदन्यापि च न तत्त्वं अन्याभावे अभावात्  
—Com. on Taittirīya Upanishad, *Brahmānanda Vallī*, II. 8.

should, by the way, like to put up a plea for a re-interpretation of that celebrated quatrain in the *Mohamudgara* (lit. the club for disillusionment) which has always been interpreted to mean and preach unmitigated or rank individualism, cynicism or nihilism—in a word, a characteristically sneakish or cowardly shunning of the world of family and social duties. The word 'तत्त्वं' in the fourth line of the verse (which reads as follows : तत्त्वं चिन्तय तदिदं ज्ञातः), having a clearly metaphysical implication challenges and gives the lie direct to the pernicious turn that has been given to what is honestly meant to be an exhortation to assume a metaphysical frame of mind. Moreover, the interpretation in question is flatly contradicted by an altogether gratuitous, if not a nugatory, form of accosting a fellowman as 'brother' in a context which is presumed to preach the gospel of cynical aloofness or self-centredness. If one, thus metaphysically disposed, cares to read between the lines, will undoubtedly discover herein a vindication of that Transcendental Selfhood, or, if we may style it, a Transcendental Hedonism in and through the countless desires and attachments of every-day life—in strict accordance with the Orthodox teaching of Advaita-Vedānta—the very pith and marrow of which was conveyed in a moment of rapt philosophic contemplation by the sage *Yājñavalkya* to *Maitreyī*, his faithful consort, in words of undying memory. The characteristic refrain 'न वा अरि सर्वस्य कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवति आत्मनस्तु कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवति' (i.e., all things and beings do not verily become dear to us for their own sake and for the sake of our desiring them, but they become dear for the sake of the Self and Self alone whom we hold dear and desire in and through all our manifold desires), epitomising as it does the best metaphysics of love, represents all our human desires and affections and love in a transfigured light, effecting in the end a 'transvaluation of all values' of life.

There is undeniably, in Śaṅkara a subdued tone of disparagement so far as he presents the case of individuality (जीवंत्वं, or जीवसदभावः) as something adjectival (बोधविक), or with the

characteristic impatience of the Absolutists, gives a grudging recognition to it. It might be contended, however, that statements with regard to the finitude or limitation (सोपाधिकत्व) of *Jivas* are, simply, statements or judgments of fact and not judgments of value—importing explicit or implicit disparagement. The contention is, indeed, plausible ; but it does not go far enough to counteract the impression which his language is not unreasonably suggestive of. Let Śaṅkara present his own case. Having rejected those existing interpretations of the relation of *Jīva* to the Supreme being which give quarter to ever so slight difference or difference and non-difference between the two, Śaṅkara embraces the one sponsored by Kāśakṛtsna inasmuch as it is in keeping with the meaning of the famous text 'thou art that.'<sup>1</sup> This he further pronounces to be the only authoritative interpretation acceptable to all Vedāntists viz., that the difference between the finite individual and the Absolute is not a metaphysical, constitutive, or real one, but is due to adjuncts in the form of body etc., individualised and conditioned by *avidyā*.<sup>2</sup> That *jīvatva* or individuality is due to an adjunct is further emphasised in a later section of the commentary on *Vedānta-sūtras* (II. iii. 17) which leaves no room for doubt as to Śaṅkara's persuasions. "This One Supreme Being has no intrinsic differentiations, as evidenced by the *Śruti* text 'One Supreme Lord, all-pervasive and all-abiding as the Soul of all souls, lies hidden in all beings.' The appearance of its sundering (into many) is conditioned by (its association with) adjuncts like the apperceptive function (of the psychical mechanism), just as (there is the appearance of sundering) of space due to association or relationship with jars etc."<sup>3</sup> On account of this adventitious delimitation "the one,

1 Com. on I. iv. 22.

2 अतश्च विज्ञानात्मपरमात्मगीरविद्याप्रत्युपस्थापितनामरूपरचितदेहाद्युदादिनिमित्तो भेदो न पारमार्थिक इत्येवोऽर्थः सर्वव्येदान्तवादिभिरभ्युपगम्यः-Com. on V.S. I. iv. 22.

3 नास्ति प्रविभागः स्वतोऽस्ति । 'एको देवः सर्वभूतेषु गूढः सर्वव्यापी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा' इति श्रुतेः । दुर्गादिनिमित्तत्वस्यप्रविभागप्रविभागमाकाशखेव घटादिसम्बन्धनिमित्तम् ।

Absolute Brahman, undifferentiated and integral in its own being, reveals itself as made up of a plurality of conscious centres of experience. The (said) fact of its being so made up is (to be really understood as) the fact of its so appearing or being so reflected owing to the non-appearance or obscuration of the intrinsic nature (of that being) apart from its apparent or manifested nature in the same way as a contemptible fellow is called effeminate or uxorious."<sup>1</sup> All alleged incompatibility between the *Śruti* texts bearing on the question of creation of finite individuals ceases to exist, in Saṃkara's opinions, on the clear enunciation of the principle that it is the undifferentiated Brahman that appears as *Jīva* or the finite individual (अविकृतस्यैव ब्रह्मणो जीवभावाभ्युपगमात्). That the *Jīva* does appear, Saṃkara does not indeed pretend to deny ; but he says that we do not presume to know how it is exactly that the Absolute appears as the *Jīva*, a finite individual. When faced with such an impending deadlock, our only availing resource is to fall back upon figurative expressions or 'myths' in the Platonic sense. Saṃkara does not indeed shun this highway through which humanity has travelled for ages. He is also seen frequently employing the simile of space and its parts, or of the Sun and its reflections (Vide the *sūtra* अत एव च उपमा सूर्यादिवत्—III. ii. 18). In one place (in his commentary on *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad* ii. 1.) he seems to be favouring the allegory of the prince, carried away by forest-rangers or hunters and brought up in such ignoble associations, coming to learn accidentally about his royal descent and thus regaining his intrinsic royalty—a view which was popularised later by Sureśvara of the Advaita Vedānta School.<sup>2</sup> Thus, our birth into this world of diversity

1 ब्रह्मण एवाविकृतस्य सतीऽप्येकस्यानेकवृत्त्यादिमयत्वं दर्शयति । तन्मयत्वस्यास्य तद्विविक्तस्वरूपानभिन्न्यक्त्या तदुपरक्तस्वरूपत्वं स्त्रीमयो जातम इत्यादिवद्द्रष्टव्यम्  
—Com. on V.S. II. iii. 17.

2 Vide *Siddhāntaleśa Sārasaṃgraha* also on the point—

अविकृतस्य ब्रह्मण एवाविद्यया जीवभावः व्याधकुलसम्बद्धित राजकुमारदृष्टान्तेन ब्रह्मेव स्वाविद्यया संसरति स्वाविद्यया विमुच्यते इति ब्रह्मदारण्यकी प्रतिपादनात् ।

is but 'a sleep and forgetting' of the 'imperial palace' from whence we came. If as it appears, we are let loose into the 'vale of soul-making,' to mould our souls through 'a chapter of accidents,' the truer reading of the situation, from the Vedāntic point of view, would be that we are here for a redemptive re-making of the whole personality—for a turning round of the eye of the soul—just to regain that peace and perfection which are eternally ours.

This is the vein in which the two well-renowned English Absolutists, Bradley and Bosanquet, habitually speak of finite individuals, and for the matter of that, of individuality or personality. Bosanquet, for example, sustains with rigid consistency and substantiates with an armoury of similes and metaphors, the view that 'the formal distinctness of selves or souls' is an appearance due to 'impotence,' and Bradley in perfect accord therewith, reduces the 'this-mine' (as the surest index of individuality) to a 'frame' that 'has as such no existence in reality, but only in our impotence.'<sup>1</sup> It is 'the existence in reality' of such a 'frame' as the very *conditio sine quā non* of finite centres of experience, 'from the side of the Absolute' as well, which Prof. Pringle-Pattison defends with passionate ardour against, what he has not inaptly called, 'the adjectival theory of the finite' in Bradley and Bosanquet. But his own 'Personal idealism' is really an 'Ethical realism' with the veil of words drawn aside. It is an artificial blend of two irreconcilable elements—the spirit of logic, of the whole or of Idealism on the one hand, and on the other, the irreducibility of the ethical category, of the notion of Personality as something ultimate.\* In his stainless and unshareable allegiance to the concept of Personality, he would much rather break with the covenanted service to Logic than acquiesce in the consequential ethical blasphemy with regard to the 'final value and destiny of the individual'—viz., that 'it

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<sup>1</sup> *Appearance and Reality*, p. 253.



is rather *a* personality than *our* personality that is essential.<sup>1</sup> This is a crucial point, and our interest in that long-drawn controversy between the Absolutist and the Personal Idealist over individuality or personality is that it has its counterpart in Vedānta philosophy. The phrasing of the issue in the significant title of the *Symposium*—"Do finite individuals possess a substantive or an adjectival mode of being?"—is suggestive of the difference of Rāmānuja from Śaṅkara on the question of individuality. It would be, however, a petulant and perverse folly to give a summary verdict that Śaṅkara explained away this fact of individuality (जीवत्व) as being inconsistent with his metaphysical sympathies. No one is more wakeful to the needs of a moral personality than Śaṅkara himself. He has wrestled with this conception in ever so many places of his commentaries on different Vedāntic treatises, presented it sometimes with the force of a metaphysical construction, and, has undoubtedly, for all times, installed it at the apex of the principle of individuation as it embodies itself in a world of *nāma* and *rūpa*, names and forms. But then, like Bosanquet, and unlike Prof. Pringle-Pattison, he did not forget that 'philosophy is largely a question of proportion' and it cannot be staked on anything 'secondary and inferential' like personality in a system of metaphysical construction. In strict fidelity to the spirit of the whole, the Brahman, which has been his abiding inspiration on 'the pathway to Reality,' he has in his philosophy safeguarded 'a personality' rather than 'our personality' so far as he winds up the controversial topic with the concluding reflection that the finite personal self is proved identical with the Supreme self by way of the denial of all finite, empirical attributes,<sup>2</sup> that the essential nature of a thing or its individuality being indestructible or immutable, the relation between the finite individual and the Absolute is not like that between a man and a city ;

1 Bosanquet : *Value and Destiny of the Individual* (p. xxxi). Summary of chap. IX.

2. विज्ञानमयस्यात्मनः सर्वसंसारधर्मप्रत्याख्यानेन परमात्मभावप्रतिपादनात्

—Com. on V.S. II. iii. 17.

but such texts as '(the self) relapses, or dies unto itself' are to the point as having reference to the veiling of its own nature through the agency of limiting adjuncts,<sup>1</sup> and that it is impossible, without the admission of a substantive identity (of the finite individual) with Brahman, accessible to knowledge, to secure release or solid singleness of existence for an active and enjoying self, like heat on the part of fire in accordance with the general rule of the inseparability of its nature (from the thing).<sup>2</sup>

So far as the finite or empirical self is concerned, Saṃkara is emphatic on the point that it is the 'psychological Me,' the object of self-consciousness (अहमन्ययविषयः), the active and enjoying self, and not the logical or ideal construct, the pure Ego of Immanuel Kant, or the witnessing consciousness (साक्षी) which is the presupposition of all finite experience.<sup>3</sup> Thus all agency belongs to the Self or Âtman so far as it is limited or individuated by a world of objects, and not intrinsically.<sup>4</sup> This investiture with the *upādhi* of *buddhi* accounts for personal identity and continuity which are comparatively in a state of abeyance and potentiality in deep sleep and bodily death, but resumes its actuality or activity on waking and rebirth.<sup>5</sup> Now the various analogies employed to set forth the nature of the *Jīva* or individual in relation to the Absolute—although, in point of fact and metaphysical reference, there is no *de facto* relationship between the alleged two beings, for the simple reason that there is only one Being—led in the post-Saṃkarite Vedānta to the formulation of different theories of that relation on the

1 स्वस्वस्य चानपायित्वात् न नरनगराद्यानि स्वस्थो घटते । सपाधिकृतस्वस्वपनिरी भावात् 'समवीतो भवति' इत्युपपद्यते—Com. on V.S. III. ii. 35.

2 न चानभ्युपगम्यमाने ज्ञानगम्ये ब्रह्मात्मत्वे कर्तृत्वभोक्तृत्वस्वभावस्यात्मनः केवल्य-माकाङ्क्षितं 'शक्यमप्रीत्यावत् स्वभावस्यापरिहार्यत्वात्—Com. on V.S. IV. iii. 14.

3 नत्वात्माहमन्ययविषयत्वादुपनिषत्स्वेवविज्ञात इत्यनुपपन्नं न, तत्साक्षित्वेन प्रत्यक्षत्वात् न अहमन्ययविषयकर्तृव्यतिरेकेण तत् साक्षी सर्वभूतस्थः सन् एकः कूटस्थमित्यः पुरुषो विधिकांते तर्कसमवाये वा केनचिदधिगतः सर्वस्यात्मा ।—Com. on V.S. I. i. 4.

4 संप्राधिकर्षाध्यासेनैवात्मनः कर्तृत्वं न स्वाभाविकम्—Com. on V.S. II. iii. 40

5 Com. on V.S. III ii. 8-10.

basis of the analogies employed by the master. As for Śaṅkara who is securely entrenched in the conception of oneness of consciousness as integral in its essence, there was scarcely any need felt to make excursions into fruitless, if not gratuitous, formulation of theories about the relation of *Jīva* and *Brahman* or *Jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā*, when there is, in point of fact, no relation at all. Just to satisfy our curiosity, we shall very briefly advert to the three broad classes under which these different views might be summed up, instead of following them up in their minuter ramifications :

(1) In the first place, we might refer to the theory known as *ābhāsavāda* or the theory of reflection, maintained and justified by the authors of the *Vārttika* and *Śaṅkṣhepa Śārīraka* on the basis of the simile of reflection, according to which *Brahman* reflected on *avidyā* is *Īśvara*, while the same principle as reflected upon intelligence or consciousness in general (*buddhi*) is *Jīva*. Both *Īśvara* and *Jīva* are reflections (*ābhāsas*) and as such belong to the realm of 'appearances,' as Bradley also would say.

(2) Secondly, reference might be made to the theory known as *Bimba-pratibimba-vāda* or the theory of the reality of appearances, (closely akin to the first theory) which is sponsored by *Prakāśatman Yuti*, the author of *Vivaraṇa*. As illustrative of the distinction between the two theories, the following text from *Brahmānanda's Ratnāvali*, is instructive. The theory which regards reflection in itself as false is designated *Abhāsavāda*, while the *pratibimbavāda* of *Vivaraṇa*, so called for its maintaining the reflection to be the reflection of a true original, holds that the reflection as reflection is false, but is true in essence.<sup>1</sup>

(3) Lastly, we might allude to the theory known as *Abachchedavāda* or the theory of modification established by *Vācaspati Miśra*, according to which *Jīva* is not a reflection but

1 खरूपतो मिथ्याभूतं प्रतिबिम्बमिति वादः आभासवादः, खरूपतः सत्यं प्रतिबिम्बस्वरूपेण मिथ्याभूतं बिम्बमेव प्रतिबिम्बमिति वादस्य विवरणीकृतस्य प्रतिबिम्बवादत्वमिति

a modification of consciousness through the cosmic nescience or *avidyā* which is manifold and seated in the *Jīva*. Thus the consequential Subjective idealism to which Vācaspati Miśra stands committed by this doctrine has, strictly speaking, no room for *Īśvara*. The author of *Kalpataru*, however, rallies to Vacāspati's side and makes room for *Īśvara* by importing a distinction into *avidyā*: *Jīva* is consciousness modified by *avidyā* units while *Īśvara* is *Brahma-caitanyam*, as modified by the totality of, or the primal *avidyā*. In such a case *Īśvara* will be consciousness witnessing the sum-total of *avidyā* and as such one over against the plurality of *Jīvas* or finite subjects that build up worlds of their own through the individuated *avidyā*.

This naturally leads up to the question of *Māyā* or *avidyā* as one or many with the resulting doctrines of *Eka-jīvanavāda* and *Anekajīvanavāda* together with the various conception of *Sākshin* or the witnessing consciousness in the Vedānta philosophy. In the first place, Śaṅkara does not lend countenance to the view that the *Jīva* is one or that there is only one finite individual, empirically speaking, just as *māyā* or *avidyā* which is the *principium individuationis* is not many but one in essence. But in later *Advaita* differences arise. In the first place there have been those Vedāntic thinkers (i) who draw an initial distinction between *Māyā* and *avidyā*, and (ii) those that do not draw this distinction but insist upon the oneness of the principle of Nescience, *māyā* or *avidyā*. According to the first view, *Māyā* is *mūla-prakṛti* with the predominance of the attribute of *Sattva* (सत्त्व) or Thought, and is the *upādhi* of *Īśvara*, while *avidyā* is the *mūla-prakṛti* with the predominance of the attribute of *rajas* (रजः) or Activity, and is the *upādhi* of *Jīva*. The former accounts for an objective order, subsisting in *Īśvara* which is the world-soul, while the latter gives a subjective order or world of existence centred in *Jīva*, the individual soul. According to the second class of thinkers, however, a distinction is drawn, within *avidyā* itself, between the *avyākṛta* or unmanifested and the *vyākṛta* or manifest state and thus is made possible the difference between *Īśvara* and *Jīva*. *Īśvara* is the

consciousness reflected upon the former, unmanifest or causal state of *avidyā*, while *Jīva* is the consciousness reflected upon the manifest, actual state of *avidyā* i.e. the psychical mechanism (*antaḥkaraṇam*). According to a slightly different construction of this view, *avidyā* admits of degrees or modifications, and, as such, *Īśvara* is the primary *Jīva* with the totality of *avidyā* as *upādhi* while *caitanyam* with individual units or modes of one primal *avidyā* as *upādhi* is *Jīva*.

Broadly speaking, these views may be classed under two heads: the One-soul theory or *eka-jīva-vāda*, and the many-souls theory or *anekajīvavāda*. The former is the view of those who hold *avidyā* or nescience to be one in principle, and accordingly maintain that *Jīva* is only one. It is Brahman apparently becoming *Jīva* through *māyā* or *avidyā* and sustaining in itself the entire manifold appearances including *Īśvara* which constitutes its presentation-continuum. This theory has been, on the ground of superficial similarity to the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* simile of a prince reared by hunters in oblivescence of his royal descent, attributed to Śaṅkara; but it is a mistake. Śaṅkara frankly allows and accepts the hypothesis of manifold *Jīvas* or centres of experience from the empirical or practical point of view. Secondly, the theory of many souls or *Jīvas* is accepted by those, like Vācaspati Miśra and others who accept that *avidyā* is manifold and consequently finite individuals or selves are not one but many. The world is the idea or creation of each *Jīva* or conscious subject. But the innate solipsism of such a standpoint is redeemed through the conception of 'inter-subjective intercourse' which suggests, reasonably enough, the conception of an objective order or a trans-subjective world. The *Jīva* no doubt imagines or constructs—subjectivity and objectivity being the twin products of the double-faced activity of nescience—its own world, but it does *ipso facto* attain to a trans-subjective world. That is the implication of his famous dictum that *māyā* or *avidyā* has *Jīva* for its locus and Brahman for its object, (जीवपदा ब्रह्मविषयः).

Kindred herewith is the Vedāntic distinction between the witnessing self (साक्षी) and the thinking-feeling-willing empirical

self or individual (जीवः) on which again, Vedāntists are sharply divided. Here however it is to be remembered that Śaṅkara-Vedānta scrupulously maintained the distinction between the two all through its various expositions. It originates in such famous Upanisadic texts as 'साक्षीचेता केवलो निर्गुणश्च' or 'वा सुपर्णा सयुजा .. चक्षोऽनन्तरमिच्छाश्रति' importing the 'spectator-theory' of consciousness which is unmistakably reminiscent of the Śaṅkhya conception of Puruṣha and the 'I think' of Kant posited as the logical presupposition of all experience in the finite souls. In the first place, we may proceed by way of a principal bifurcation of (i) those that hold *Jīva* to be the *sākshī* or witness and (ii) those who consider *Brahman* to be the *sākshī* or witness. The former class again, admits of a two-fold sub-division : (a) Those (e.g. Prakāśatmayatī, the author of *Vivaraṇa*) who view *Jīva* as a reflection of consciousness upon *avidyā*, which acts as its *upādhi* or limitation, and accordingly, is itself the direct witness, as being the all-pervasive consciousness. Vācaspati also shares this view but with a difference of emphasis. Like the author of *Vivaraṇa*, he also accepts the *avidyā*-units to be the limiting conditions of consciousness. Consciousness thus limited is *Jīva*, while consciousness as witnessing this limiting condition itself is *Sākshī* or the witness, while, according to the former, the witness or the *sākshī* is one, as the *Jīva* is one, Vācaspati would, in strict consistency with his hypothesis of *anekajīva-vāda*, posit a witnessing self or *sākshī* for each conscious unit or *jīva*. This seems to have been the authority in support of the outspoken multiplication of the *Jīva-sākshī* or the witnessing selves to which the author of the *Vedāntaparibhāṣhā* resorts, by way of substantiating very cogently, the epistemological demand of personal identity on the basis of the unity of apperception.<sup>1</sup> But it must be remembered, after all, that according to Vācaspati it is the *Jīva*, and not *Brahman*, which is the *sākshī* or witness.

(b) Those who regard the witness or *sākshī* to be the *Jīva*—

१. चक्षुः जीवसाक्षी प्रत्यात्मं नाना, एकत्वे तु चेद्विद्यते नैवत्याज्यमुसम्मानप्रसंगः—  
प्रथमपरिच्छेदः।

not in the form of an 'all-pervasive intelligence—but *Jīva* as having the psychical apparatus or *antaḥkaraṇam* as its limiting adjunct. But it must not be confused with the *Jīva* which is also furnished with the inner organ (*antaḥkaraṇam*) as the *sine qua non* of perception on the ground that the percipient *Jīva* ceases in deep sleep, while the witnessing self or *sākshī* as an illuminating agency of the blank and bliss thereof, persists in the back-ground. The Vedāntist, however, provides for the distinction between the two by way of a subtle distinction between a predicate that is essential and intrinsic and a predicate that is non-essential and extrinsic—between *viśeṣan* (विशेषणं) or *proprium* as the functioning adjunct in one case and *upādhi* (उपाधिः) or *accidens* in the other. As the *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* enforces this distinction: "The *Jīva* is verily consciousness modalised or differentiated by inner organ, while the *jīvasākshī* is consciousness limited or conditioned by the inner organ. Their difference is only due to the inner organ functioning respectively as an attribute or property (in one case) and as an accident or limitation (in the other)."<sup>1</sup> Similarly, as the *Siddhāntaleśa* puts it, 'the *jīva* becomes the witness or *sākshī* as conditioned by the inner organ while the *Jīva* is the conscious subject as modified by the inner organ.'<sup>2</sup>

(ii) Now as to those who hold Brahman to be the witness or *sākshī*. Here also we have a sub-division. (a) Some think that the witness or *sākshī* is the *Īśvara* or *Brahman* so far as it is the inmost being and is immanent in *Jīvas* (अन्तर्यामी). It is the principle that has nescience itself, pure blank or non-existence for its object in deep sleep. As the scriptures put it, the individual in deep sleep as being in the embrace of the universal self, verily like the husband in the embrace of a beloved wife, knows nothing without or within.<sup>3</sup>

1 जीवो नाम अन्तःकरणवच्छिन्नं चैतन्यं, तत्साक्षीतु अन्तःकरणोपहितं चैतन्यम् । अन्तःकरणस्य विशेषणत्वोपाधित्वाभ्यामनयोर्भेदः ।—प्रथमपरिच्छेदः

2 अन्तःकरणोपाधानेन जीवः साक्षी...अन्तःकरणविशिष्टः प्रमाता—सिद्धान्तलेखः—I,

3 तद्यथा प्रियया स्त्रिया सम्परिवृत्तो न बाह्यं किञ्चन वेद नान्तरेतिवन्निर्वायं पुरुषः माझेनात्मना सम्परिवृत्तो न बाह्यं किञ्चन वेद नान्तरं—Brhad. Up. IV. 3. xxi.

(b) Some again, e.g. the author of *Pañcadaśī*, think that the witness or *sākshī* is not *Īśvara* but the absolute and immutable consciousness, underlying all finer and gross bodies and perceiving them, without being in any way affected thereby.<sup>1</sup>

We may note, by the way, the distinction which the *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* draws, on the analogy of that between *Jīva* and *Jīvasākshī*, between *Īśvara* and *Īśvarasākshī*, the would-soul and the eternal consciousness operating in the universe as a whole. *Īśvarasākshī*, however, is consciousness conditioned or limited by *Māyā*, and that is one, the conditioning *Māyā* itself being one. Consciousness modified or modalized by *māyā* is *Paramēśvara*, the nature of *Īśvara* being constituted by *Māyā* functioning as an attribute or property, and the nature of *Īśvarasākshī* by *Māyā* functioning as an accident or condition—and it is thus the distinction is made between *Īśvara* and *Īśvarasākshī*, not that there is distinction in their underlying essence or substance.<sup>2</sup>

It is interesting to note the Vedāntic conception of *Hiraṇyagarbha* (literally, full of the effulgence or splendour of knowledge within) which compares not unfavourably with the Kantian conception of *Bewusstsein überhaupt* or consciousness in general. It is sometimes also called *Prāṇa* because of its immanence in all creation and of being the animating principle of knowledge, will, and power. It is the cosmic counterpart of the *Taijas* (the effulgent) which, as determined by the individual subtle body, is the subject of individual dream-consciousness. The *Hiraṇyagarbha*, on the other hand, otherwise denominated as the *Sūtrātmā*, (literally, the conscious principle that threads together all consciousness), is determined by the cosmic dream-consciousness. As co-extensive with the entire expanse of being, it has knowledge of its entire existence and is composed of the sheaths of vitality, mind and intelligence (प्राणमयः, मनोमयः

1 कूटस्थ एव सर्वत्र पूर्वाचार्यैर्विनिश्चितः।—*Pañcadaśī* 'Kutastha deepa,' 25.

2 ईश्वरसाक्षी तु मायोपहितं चैतन्यं, तच्चैकं, तदुपाधिभूतमायाया एकत्वात्।... मायावच्छिन्नं चैतन्यञ्च परमेश्वरः, माया विशेषणत्वे ईश्वरत्वं उपाधित्वे साक्षित्वं ईश्वरत्वसाक्षित्वयोर्भेदः, न तु धर्मियोरीश्वरतत्साक्षिणोः—*Vedāntaparibhāṣā*, Chapter I.



and विज्ञानमयकोषः). the next higher in the scale being *Īśvara* encased in the sheath of bliss (आनन्दमयकोषः). But we have to traverse this entire scale of being and penetrate beyond this sheath of bliss into the golden sheath of serene light in which is seated Brahman in its integrity.<sup>1</sup> As Śamkara remarks so significantly : “we have to go behind the five *koshas* to find our true self (tre *Prājñā*)—far and away, beyond the physical sheath, the vital principle, beyond the mind and intellect and beyond even the beatific consciousness. Now the world (जगत्), as repeatedly affirmed by Advaita-Vedānta, is a *vivartta*, appearance or evolution without substantial mutation with reference to Brahman or the Absolute, while it is a *pariṇāma*, evolution or real transformation of *Brahman* as invested or associated with *Māyā*. It thus accepts *vivartta śr̥ṣhti* in a transcendental reference and combines it with *pariṇāma śr̥ṣhti* as an empirical method of explaining the world-order. Empirically speaking, therefore, the world is a continuous process of evolution—the initial impulse to which has been given by the original act of will on the part of the One to become many (बहुसां प्रजायेद्य). Thus the empirical theory of evolution is not incompatible with the admission of an original act of will starting the course of evolution.<sup>2</sup> How can there be conceived, it will probably be urged, a volition or desire (ईच्छा) prior to creation, (when the world of objects is not yet in existence), seeing that all desires can originate *posterius* to the creation of a world of objects, there being no such thing as an abstract, contentless, general will? Is not such a will or volition something undetermined, veritably like a bullet shot out of a pistol. But the original choice or will of the creator, (as we have already discussed in the previous section) is not absolutely undetermined, but precipitated or conditioned under the stress of the potencies or energies stored up in the form of *kormas* of creatures about to be created (सृज्यमानप्राणिकर्मवर्जिन).<sup>3</sup> This original choice which lies at the root of creation (ईच्छा-

1 द्विरमये परी कोषे विरजं ब्रह्म निष्कलम्—Māṇḍūkya II. 9.

2 सृष्टिपूर्वसमये परमेस्वरस्यागन्तुकनीयत्वं—Vedāntaparibhāṣā, Chapter I.

3 Ibid., Chap. I.

पूर्विकादृष्टिः) has been figuratively called the primeval glance or attention (प्रथमबौद्धिः). It has a remarkable functional similarity with 'the proximity to *Purusha*' (पुरुषसाध्निः) which, in the *Sāṃkhya* system, disturbs the original equilibrium and unevolved state of *Prakṛiti* (as the equilibrated state of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* : सत्त्वराजतमसां साम्यावस्था प्रकृतिः) and thus sets *Prakṛiti* on the course of evolution. Thus Vedāntism is a system of creative evolution. But it by no means follows that the world is summoned into existence by the issue of a fiat : 'Let there be', or created out of nothing, as the scholastics love to call it. Vedantism does not subscribe to any such creation out of nothing.<sup>1</sup> This doctrine is duly meant to be a rigid denial of a pre-existing material anterior to, or co-eternal with, *Īśvara*. But Vedāntism believes in the existence of, and in fact presupposes, the *Karmas* as material potentialities or energies even when the world is seemingly dissolved or destroyed. 'The world so dissolved subsists as a store-house of unevolved potencies and emerges therefrom, in the absence of which there would be creation out of nothing', says Śaṅkara.<sup>1</sup> Thus the disappearance or the withdrawal of the world is a temporary withdrawal into the primal unity with the promise of re-appearance for the actualisation of the potential forces of *karma*. The world is therefore independent of finite consciousness, and may be termed objective in that sense. Accordingly this has been called the theory of *Śṛṣhti-Dṛṣhti* (सृष्ट्युद्भाविनी दृष्टिः दृष्टिदृष्टिरित्येते). Others however, like Prākāśānanda, the author of *Siddhāntamuktāvali*, throw overboard this theory of periodical or cyclical evolution and involution and subscribe, with a Berkeleyan emphasis, to the doctrine that *Dṛṣhti*, seeing or perceiving, is *Śṛṣhti* or creation. *Esse is percipi*. This directly falls in with the *Ekajīvāvda* or solipsism according to which nothing is real save Brahman, the only self (एकजीवः) to whose perception, the world owes its origin and existence. 'The world is my idea,' said Schopenhauer ; 'the world the wise maintain to be ideal while

1 प्रतीयमानमपि चेदं जगच्छब्दवशेषमेव प्रतीयते शक्तिमूलमेव च प्रभवतीति तथा  
शौकिककल्पप्रसङ्गात्—Com. on V.S. I. iii. 30.

the unenlightened or stupid erroneously view it as objective" says Prakāśānanda.<sup>1</sup> This theory of *Dṛṣhti-Sṛṣhti*, again, assumes two forms, admitting of a subtle distinction. The *Vedāntasiddhāntādarśa* phrases the distinction thus: "According to one version of the theory of *Dṛṣhti-Sṛṣhti*, *Dṛṣhti* or *perciṇi* is itself *Sṛṣhti* or creation; according to a different version of it, however, *Sṛṣhti* is synchronous with *Dṛṣhti*".<sup>2</sup> The former is the view sponsored by Prakāśānanda, the author of *Siddhāntamuktābali*, as has been more clearly and specifically delineated in an explanatory note: 'according to *Siddhāntamuktābali*, the world is of the very stuff of intelligence or ideal in essence, there being lack of evidence for the difference of the objective world from the perception thereof; while, according to a different version of the theory of *Dṛṣhti-Sṛṣhti* the world is surely synchronous with the perception of it, on account of the impossibility of a non-distinction between the conscious and the unconscious and of the impossibility of the pre-existence of the world prior to, and different from *perciṇi*, whose nature is to reveal or witness.'<sup>3</sup> This interesting development of Saṃkara-Vedānta in the direction of an undisguised subjective idealism gives the lie direct to the realistic trend of thought—of course, an empirical realism—that lies embedded in the thought of the great master. Such a development is, by reason of its sympathies drawn perilously near the view of the world as a 'presentation-continuum' (विज्ञानसन्तानः) obtaining in the Yogācāra school of Buddhists, which was severely castigated by Saṃkara (in his famous commentaries on V. S. II, ii. 28-32) and which needs no repetition here. In spite of that formidable critique on subjective idealism, any attempt at reviving a solipsistic construction of Advaita-Vedānta is clearly unhistorical and unauthoritative.

<sup>1</sup> 'ज्ञानस्वरूपमेवाहुर्जगदिति चिच्छब्दाः । अर्थस्वरूपं भाव्यन्तः पश्यन्त्येते कुड्दृष्टयः ॥

<sup>2</sup> दृष्टिरेव भवेत् सृष्टिर्दृष्टिर्दृष्टिर्भवेत् तथा । दृष्टिकालीनसृष्टिस्तु दृष्टिसृष्टिर्भवेत्तानरे ॥

<sup>3</sup> सिद्धान्तमुक्तावलीमते दृश्यस्य दृष्टिर्मेदं प्रमाणाभावाददृष्टेयं स्वयंप्रकाशभावात्स्वरूपत्वात्-ज्ञानस्वरूपमेव (प्रतीतिकमेव) जगदित्यर्थः, तथाऽन्यदृष्टिसृष्टिर्वादिमते चिदचिदोरभिदाऽसम्भवात्सृष्टिरूपदृष्टिभिन्नमपि जगददृष्टेः प्रागसत्त्वादृष्टिसमकालीनमेवेत्यर्थः ।

Accordingly, Śaṅkara does envisage the problem of creative evolution as conceived by *Advaita-Vedānta* and offer a cosmology of the Vedānta from the orthodox standpoint. In the beginning of a particular cycle of existence, the entire world is supposed to have been lying dormant in Brahman as the result of the periodical re-absorption or dissolution of the world therein. The creative power of Brahman reveals itself in making manifest these seed-forms of things and the individual souls as so many *karmic* potentialities or forces constituting the body of Brahman who is the material as well as the efficient cause of the world. Of the endlessly diverse cosmologies that have been offered by later Vedāntic writers, we shall content ourselves with the order of creation delineated by the *Vedānta-paribhāṣā*<sup>1</sup> as being the most in accord with Śaṅkara's standpoint, and at the same time most philosophically thought out. Creation sets in when the primeval quiescence—brought about by a shifting equilibrium of forces at work—is disturbed from within by an inner necessity or a self-determination on the part of the Creator, who is then called, not Brahman, but *Parameśvara*. Creation may be viewed in its two inter-related aspects—the causal and the effectual. The causal aspect of it consists in the original desire to expand or propagate and *Māyā* is presupposed in the evolution of the five elements. It must be remembered, however, that *māyā*, philosophically construed, is not a force but a method, a *modus operandi* (आपारः) of the Creator ; just as Evolution is not a *Cause* but a *Method* and, as such does not run counter to a theistic or teleological interpretation of the world. This is a point which is so often lost sight of even by eminent thinkers and critics, both in the East and in the West. Now this *Parameśvara* is variously denominated as *Brahmā*, *Vishnu* and *Śiva* or *Maheśvara*, according as the elements of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* predominate in the causal aspect of *māyā*, functioning all along as an *upādhi* of this trinity, or rather of the tri-une *Parameśvara* as the creator, preserver and destroyer of the world. *Parameśvara* is the direct creator of the five subtle

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<sup>1</sup> Chapter VII, the section on 'जगती जन्मकालः'

elements, of the *lingaśarīra* (लिंगशरीरः) or causal body, and of the *Hiraṇyagarva*, the first-born or the first created being (प्रथमो जीवः or प्रारो प्रथमः), and is indirectly through the *Hiraṇyagarva*, the author of the manifold (गमकपे) or concrete things (इतरनिखिलप्रपञ्चीत् पत्नी च हिरण्यगर्भद्वारा—*Vedāntaparibhāṣhā* Chap. VII). The inorganic nature consists of the five elements which are called *sūkshma bhūtas* or subtle matter and they originate in continuous succession. As the *Taittirīya Śruti* puts it, “*ākāśa* is the first evolute to come into being from the self-alienation of Brahman. From *ākāśa* originates *vāyū*, from *vāyū*, *tejas*, from *tejas āp*, from *āp pṛthivī* i.e. earth.”<sup>1</sup> Sāṅkara, it is to be noted by the way, rejects the Buddhistic conception of *ākāśa* as the mere absence of concealment (आवरणभावः), a negative entity. As the Vedāntic school does not believe in the atomicity of matter, it endows the elements with distinctive qualities or rather equate them therewith (तन्मात्राणि). From these subtle matters or *sūkshma bhūtas* originate gross ones i.e. *sthūlabhūtas* or *mahābhūtas*. All these fine subtle elements enter into the composition of the gross matter which is made up of the varying combination in different proportions of the subtle matter—the process of this materialisation being unknown as *Pañchīkaraṇa*. The gross substance *ākāśa* manifests sound (शब्दः); *vāyū* or air sound and pressure (शब्दस्पर्शौ); *tejas* or fire, sound, pressure and heat or light (शब्दस्पर्शरूपाः); *āp* or water sound, pressure, heat or light and qualities of taste (शब्दस्पर्शरूपरसाः); *pṛthivī* or earth, sound, pressure, heat or light and the qualities of taste and smell (शब्दस्पर्शरूपरसगन्धाः). This is the order obeyed by the evolution of the universe.

The process of *Pañchīkaraṇa*, five-fold combination or ‘quintuplication’ requires some explanation and justification in the face of conflicting opinions among Vedāntists on that point. The doctrine of quintuplication has its earliest indication and anticipation in the *Chāndogya Upanishad* where a process of triplication of the three elements of ‘*Tejas*,’ ‘*Āp*’ and ‘*pṛthivī*,’

1 तन्मात्रा एतन्मात्रात्मन आकाशः सम्भूतः । आकाशाद्वायुः । वायोरग्निः । अग्नेरूपः । अग्नाः पृथिवी ।

is specifically mentioned. But the *taṭtirīya* by implication understands it as a theory of quintuplication adding 'ākāśa' and 'vāyu' to the list of the three mentioned in the *Chāndogya* Upanishad. It has been authoritatively accepted in such later works on Advaita-Vedānta as the *Pañcadaśī* and *Vedānta-paribhāṣhā* as against the theory of 'triplication' to which Vācaspati Miśra, and the author of the *Kalpataru* stick in a spirit of rigid orthodoxy out of regard for the letter of *Śruti* texts. The *Vedānta-paribhāṣhā*, however, clearly affirms that 'the texts bearing on triplication imply quintuplication,<sup>1</sup> quoting it with approval from Sadānanda Yati. Now, what this doctrine of *Pañchīkaraṇa* imports is that are five elements soon after origin are disintegrated into parts and seek to re-combine in the form of the *mahābhūtas*. Having bifurcated (each) into two equal parts, of which again, one part is divided into four equal parts, and re-combined each of these four equal parts with the other four halves of the *sūkshma-bhūtas*, we have the five *sthūlabhūtas* or *mahābhūtas*.<sup>2</sup> We can schematise the process of quintuplication thus :

- Gross (Sthūla) ākāśa =  $\frac{1}{2}$  ākāśa +  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  ( $\frac{1}{2}$  vāyu +  $\frac{1}{2}$  āp +  $\frac{1}{2}$  tejas +  $\frac{1}{2}$  pṛthivi).
- Gross ((Sthūla) āp =  $\frac{1}{2}$  āp +  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  ( $\frac{1}{2}$  vāyu +  $\frac{1}{2}$  ākāśa +  $\frac{1}{2}$  tejas +  $\frac{1}{2}$  pṛthivi).
- Gross (Sthūla) vāyu =  $\frac{1}{2}$  vāyu +  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  ( $\frac{1}{2}$  pṛthivi +  $\frac{1}{2}$  ākāśa +  $\frac{1}{2}$  tejas +  $\frac{1}{2}$  āp).
- Gross (Sthūla) tejas =  $\frac{1}{2}$  tejas +  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  ( $\frac{1}{2}$  vāyu +  $\frac{1}{2}$  ākāśa +  $\frac{1}{2}$  āp +  $\frac{1}{2}$  tejas).
- Gross (Sthūla) pṛthivi =  $\frac{1}{2}$  pṛthivi +  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  ( $\frac{1}{2}$  vāyu +  $\frac{1}{2}$  ākāśa +  $\frac{1}{2}$  āp +  $\frac{1}{2}$  pṛthivi).

Thus we can conceive a kingdom of created things arising out of the matrix of *aparā-prakṛti* by a process of quintuplication.

1 विभक्तकरणमुतेः पञ्चैकरणीयसंख्यात्—सप्तमपरिच्छेदः

2 विधा विधाय चैकैकं चतुर्धा प्रथमं पुनः स्वस्वतरहितीयार्थैर्योजनात् पञ्च पञ्च ते ॥  
 -Vidyāraṇya,

## LECTURE XI.

### THE ETHICS OF THE VEDĀNTA.

If creation, as the foregoing metaphysical inquiry has unmistakably shown subserves a moral purpose,<sup>1</sup> if the world of finite individuals or *Jīvas* is in literalness of fact, a 'scale of soul-making,' then, assuredly, the life of every finite self or individual is *ipso facto* one of ethical aspiration and endeavour. The standing paradox of the ethical and religious life—indeed the very keynote of a spiritual life—consists in a ceaseless 'dying to live', and it is by such perpetual self-transcendence that the self actualises its infinite potentiality and reality, and justifies its title thereto. Thus self-hood or individuality is essentially an ethical or dynamic category. Herein is to be found the truest explanation of the Advaita doctrine of the immanence of the Divine in the human. But it is a sheer travesty of this doctrine of metaphysical oneness to construe it—as the average Western thinker invariably does (even some Oriental scholars of the eminence of Deussen not excepted)—in an unethical reference, that is to say, as a *fait accompli* dispensing with the necessity of the process of achieving that oneness, which must needs be a matter of aspiration and striving rather than one of attainment and enjoyment to begin with. Critics conveniently ignore the fact that the doctrine of oneness to which the *Advaita Vedānta* stands pledged, the Vedāntic God-in-man, is a task as well as a fact, is as much a problem as a possession. Man's distinctive prerogative as man consists just in this that he can not be put in a line with 'low kinds' that are in point of fact so many finished and 'finite clods, untroubled by a spark.' Man is finite-infinite in so far as he is a spiritual being—'for ay removed from the developed brute: a God though in the germ.'

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<sup>1</sup> Vide Com. on *Vedānta Sūtras*, II, i, 33.

The prolific source of misdirection on the part of these critics lies in their unreasoned acceptance of the view of self-hood or human personality sponsored by institutional Christianity. The basic dualism, whether ingrained or inherited, that separates the world of created beings from the Creator by the whole diameter of being is one of the vital strands of orthodox Christianity and, as such necessitates Divine mediatorship and vicarious redemption of all by such a Mediator. Thus for orthodox Christianity the entire realm of ethics is staked on the maintenance of this ineradicable dualism together with the *status quo* of the individual. It is no wonder, therefore, that people nurtured in such an atmosphere should fall foul of *Advaita Vedānta* on the score of its alleged un-ethical monism of the most uncompromising type which, in chasing away the last vestige of dualism or distinction from its schema of reality, necessarily impairs the validity of the so-called eternal and immutable laws of morality. Nevertheless, it is sheer perversity to stick to this line of criticism in the face of clear enunciation by Śaṅkara, of his own view regarding the place and function of ethics in a philosophical rendering of the world. What Śaṅkara, however, has been all along contending against is the finality of the ethical categories construed in an absolute metaphysical (पारमार्थिक, to use Śaṅkara's own words) reference, while consistently conceding, and in fact insisting on, the empirical or practical (व्यवहारिक) reality of these. Believing, as he does, in self-hood as a process, rather than a state, Śaṅkara has no difficulty in establishing the episodic character of ethical distinctions, and vindicating their emergent and relative reality in the pathway to liberation (मोक्षः)—which is the crowning achievement of all intellectual and ethical disciplines.

This is a point of first-rate importance in any intelligent understanding and faithful presentation of Śaṅkara-Vedānta position. While fully upholding the inviolability and majesty of the Law of Karma and therewith the validity of the distinction of good and evil or merit and demerit (पद्मविन्द) which form



the very basis and fulcrum of a Divine government<sup>1</sup> of the world and of ethical theism in general, he never yet loses sight of that *finale* of perfected selfhood, that bliss of the unitive life, beyond good and evil, of which, as the seers of the *Upanishad* testify,<sup>2</sup> it is the exclusive privilege of the wise to be the legatee. Thus, it is in the attainment of an absolute oneness of being, which is at once the completion and *raison d'être* of the life of ethical endeavour, that the requirements of the ideal of holiness are satisfied. Without such a monistic crown, any progressive scale of moral perfection must ever remain truncated and devoid of a grounding in reality. An ideal as ideal fails to furnish the dynamic of moral life, unless it is known to have been realised *in toto* in some integral experience. Not *doing* but *being* in an ultimate reference—that should in all conceivability be the ideal of ethical conduct, and it is only Sāṃkhya-Vedānta that has the sufficiency to envisage fully the ideal of perfection and pursue, with vertical consistency to its logical conclusion, the implications of the injunction: 'Be ye perfect'—an injunction which is more often sinned against than sinning in the European construction of it. Accordingly, in the place of a placid contentment with the European side-view, what is needed in this respect is a more courageous and conscientious orientation of the maxim—an adventure of faith, so to speak. Hence no mere outward conformity to a rule of conduct will ensure the attainment of the ideal of moral perfection: nothing short of the regeneration of the whole man will bring about that holiness or purity of motives which is the final demand of the perfectionist ethics of *Advaita-Vedānta*.

Thus, to map out the course of moral progress, the very entrance to the moral life is the quickening of that life according to reason which must necessarily break with that life of unreflecting acquiescence in the satisfaction of mere animal wants, characteristic of the life according to nature, which

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<sup>1</sup> Com. on V.S. II. i. 34.

<sup>2</sup> "विद्वान् पुण्ड्रपादे विधूय निरञ्जनः परमं साम्यमुपैति"—Mundaka Upanishad, III. i. verse. 3.

exhibits itself in its purity in the brutes, man alone having the distinctive prerogative of looking 'before and after' and attaining unto a vision of the life Eternal in and through things temporal.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, the ascent above the merely animal level, which is shot through with that stress and strain between duty and inclination, between free causality and nature-necessity, between the desirable and the agreeable (पुरुषकारः and प्रकृतिः, श्रेयः and the प्रेयः),<sup>2</sup> symptomatic of the moral manhood, naturally seeks its fulfilment in a state of holiness wherein this necessary concomitant of the moral life,—an element of coercion and friction—is fully transcended. But such transcendence—which has proved to be the source of endless misdirection to the critics of Advaita-Vedānta—is not to be construed, as is so often done but without any warrant whatsoever, in the sense of annulment or abrogation of recognised laws of morals or ethical distinctions. In any such conceivable consummation of the moral life, the life according to rule—the code of injunctions and prohibitions (विधिनिषेधौ)—undergoes only a transfiguration and acquires a new dimension of value, the centre of gravity having been shifted from the externally imposed law to the eternally realised *Ātman* within the inner self (प्रत्यगात्मा), as the author and inspirer of the entire code of ethics. The life of law thus culminates in the life of love, for love, as they say, is 'the fulfilling of the law', and this is exactly what the Śaṅkara-Vedānta seeks to convey by the ideal of a cosmic expansion of self (सर्व्वान्नाभावः) which is another name for Vedāntic redemption (मोक्षः). When this supreme knowledge of the oneness of soul dawns upon the philosophic pilgrim in his uphill work 'with aching hands and bleeding feet,'<sup>3</sup> a new light bursts upon him and the erstwhile moral probationer is tempted

1 [पुरुषो] हि प्रज्ञानेन सम्पन्नतमः विज्ञानं पश्यति श्रुतं...मर्त्तेनाद्यतमीक्षति । इतरेषु पशूनामश्नापिपासे एवमिविज्ञानम्—Com. on *Taittirya Upanishad*, II. i.

2 Vide Com. on *Bhagavadgītā*, III. 33; also on *Katha Upanishad*,

1. ii. verses 1-3.

3 Matthew Arnold, *Poems*: "Morality."

to exclaim in the words of the poet: "I who saw Power, see now Love perfect too."<sup>1</sup> From such a higher altitude of spiritual realisation, 'it is easier to appreciate the deeper philosophic import of the Nietzschean maxim of 'the transvaluation of all values' than it was possible for the author himself, from his own standpoint of 'amoralism.' Critics who, out of a scrupulous regard for the so-called 'conservation of moral values' charge Śaṅkara along with Spinoza, Nietzsche and Russell, with formulating a system of philosophy that is subversive altogether of ethical distinctions or moral values, do but confuse the issue between 'values' and 'valuation.' It is an ethical commonplace that our valuations are not at all constant, but are subject to change and development. While the *Advaita-Vedānta* stands pledged to the consolidation and conservation of the ethical values, it gives by no means a pledge of continuance to the distracting varieties of ethical valuations, destitute of a survival-value. To that extent Śaṅkara-Vedānta is on the true line of advance—in hearty agreement with Spinoza and Russell. An 'ethically inspired metaphysics'—with its faith pinned to the division of the world into two hostile camps, as it were, of good and evil and by which ethics always swears,—is to Russell something of the nature of a hybrid construction, a monstrous aberration on the part of the strictly theoretical impulse in man; for, 'ethics, however refined, remains more or less subjective' and 'the philosophy which it inspires is always more or less parochial, more or less infected with the prejudices of a time and a place.'<sup>2</sup> To Russell good and evil have a meaning wholly practical in character—a meaning traceable to the 'gregarious' or group instinct of man as their originative source. Accordingly 'so long as we remain merely impartial (in our contemplative life) we may be content to say that both the good and the evil of actions are illusions. But if we find the whole world worthy of love and worship we shall say that there is a higher good than that of action,

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<sup>1</sup> Browning, *Rabbi Ben Ezra*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Herbert Spencer Lecture*, pp. 5, 14, 15.

and that this higher good belongs to the whole world as it is in reality.<sup>1</sup> It is with reference to this 'higher good than that of action,' as we might note here conveniently, that the *Svetāśvatara Upanishad* speaks of a 'stage of supreme illumination in which there is neither day nor night, neither reality nor unreality, but the good alone'<sup>2</sup>—the good of mystic contemplation, the good in an absolute reference, beyond the good and evil of the life of action or morality. What Russell recommends as his considered opinion on the subject is 'that the elimination of ethical considerations from philosophy is both scientifically necessary—and though this may seem a paradox—an ethical advance.'<sup>3</sup>

To all these findings of Russell's Śaṅkara would readily subscribe but with a difference of emphasis. No one, for example, is more perfectly at home in the parochial character of ethical codes than Śaṅkara himself. Says he, 'what is followed as the virtuous or right course of conduct in some particular clime at some particular time and under some particular circumstances, turn out to be the very reverse, that is to say, the vicious course in some other clime, at some other time and under a different set of circumstances.'<sup>4</sup> He would not surely go in for an unconditional 'elimination of ethical considerations'—even though it were construed as 'an ethical advance'—except it be on condition of their fulfilment in a supra-moral state of existence. He would advocate, in other words, sublimation in place of elimination of ethical considerations, and this is strictly in accordance with his philosophic persuasion that it is only in the attainment of the knowledge of the Supreme Being that the entire code of duties and ethical

1 *Mysticism and Logic*.

2 यदात्मसन्न दिवा न रात्रिर्न सन्न चासञ्जिव एव किवलः—Chap. IV. verse 18.

3 *Mysticism and Logic*.

4 यस्मिन् देशे काले निमित्ते च या धर्मोऽनुष्ठायते, स एव देशकालनिमित्तान्तरवर्त्तमानवति—Com. on V.S. III. i. 25.

maxims finds its natural completion and culmination.<sup>1</sup> It is his reasoned conviction that the active and the contemplative life,—*Karma* and *Jñān*—though poles asunder in their essential nature, do yet co-operate towards the fulfilment of the supreme end of human life, *Moksha* or liberation.<sup>2</sup> Such a philosophic consecration of *Karma* on the part of a radical anti-pragmatist or anti-*Mimāmsist* like Śaṅkara, who has left no stone unturned to drive in a wedge between the theoretical and the practical aspects of human nature, between *Karma* leading unto bondage and *Jñāna* showing the way to liberation, may seem at first sight to be strangely at variance with the fundamental creed of the philosopher—to be condoned perhaps only as an involuntary concession to popular demand. But on a closer and critical sifting of his utterances, it will be found that he has re-iterated this claim on behalf of *Karma* and the life of voluntary discharge of ethical duties as being ancillary or instrumental to the attainment of the supreme end (प्रवचार्थः) of life. Although he appears herein to have mitigated the opposition between the two, such a minimising of the interval between *Karma* and *Jñāna* does in no way lend countenance to the hybrid doctrine of action-cum-contemplation (कर्माज्ञान-समुच्चयवादः) against which his own anti-pragmatic dianoeitic system of ethics was a sustained polemic. All that this moderation amounts to is a denial of antagonism between the two, while antithesis there surely is, and must ever remain. In consonance with his fundamental tenet that the liberated state is eternally accomplished and not contingent upon any human activity, Śaṅkara only allows a subsidiary function to *Karma*—as a direct means of that supreme knowledge which has the saving grace.<sup>3</sup> Hence *Karma* acquires a metaphorical exten-

1 यत् कर्तव्यं तत् सर्व्वं भगवत्तत्त्वे विदिते कृतं भवेदित्यर्थः न चान्यथा कर्तव्यं परिसमाप्यते कस्यचिदित्यभिप्रायः। 'सर्व्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ ! ज्ञाने' परिसमाप्यत' इति श्लोकम्।—Com. on B. G. Chap. XV verse 15.

2 Vide Com. on V.S. IV. i. 16, 18; Com. on *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up.* III iii. 1; also B. G. XVIII, Com. on verses 44, 45, 47

3 आरादुपकारकत्वात् कर्मणः। ज्ञानस्यैव हि प्राप्तं कर्म, प्रवचार्था मोक्षकारणमित्युपचर्य्यते—Com on V.S. IV. i. 16.

sion of its efficacy as an instrument of redemption and thus is established the authority or (empirical) reality of the ethical code from the standpoint of *Samkhya-Vedānta*.<sup>1</sup> Far from being subversive, therefore, of my station as a moral being and the duties incidental thereto, the Knowledge of the Self in its integrity—which is the metaphysical implication of all ethical dualism—is the fitting epilogue to the drama of moral life at once continuous with, and an advance beyond the original. significance and acquires a new extension of meaning which is at once continuous with and an advance beyond the original. There is thus relative justification for Deussen's contention that 'when the knowledge of the ātman has been gained, every action, and therefore every moral action also, has been deprived of meaning.'<sup>2</sup> But this is, as we know, only a half-truth which is too apt to be distorted into flagrant untruth by ever so slight a change of emphasis ; and one need not wonder if this dictum were made to sponsor the current misconception that there is no room for morality in the so-called pantheistic or monastic system of *Advaita-Vedānta*. The absurdity of this contention will be increasingly apparent as we proceed.

The very fulcrum and moving spring, the Alpha and the Omega 'in a sense, of the ethics of *Advaita-Vedānta* is the doctrine of the oneness of Self, which is identical with Brahman (आत्मा च ब्रह्म). But the Self to which it appeals and owns allegiance is not the self, as ordinarily understood,—something finished and finite, meant to be possessed and enjoyed but something to be achieved with 'effort and expectation,' something 'evermore about to be'—selfhood being, as already noted, of the nature of a process rather than a state. It is thus a literal rendering of the *Vedāntic* thesis—

"What I aspired to be,

And was not, comforts me

A brute I might have been, but would not sink in the scale"

1 न च कर्मविधिमुत्तरप्रामाण्यं पूर्वपूर्वप्रवृत्तिनिरोधेनीतरीतरापूर्वपूर्वप्रवृत्तिजन-

नस्य प्रत्यगात्माभिमुख्यप्रवृत्त्युत्पादनार्थत्वात्—Com. on B.G. XVIII verse 67.

2 *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, p. 362.

—namely, that man alone (as distinguished from the brute) has the exclusive privilege of exerting or energising towards the attainment of the *summum bonum*, the *ne plus ultra* of the perfection of his existence.<sup>1</sup> Therein consists the true manhood of man as a moral being, also the perennial source of his inspiration and incentive to the life of strenuous moral endeavour. To that end, therefore, what is initially required is the power to discriminate between the good and the pleasant, the preferable and the agreeable, with which the moral life ushers itself into existence. In the famous phraseology of the *Katha Upanishad*,<sup>2</sup> “the good is one thing, and the pleasant is another—both holding man in bondage to diverse ends. Of these, the good or the preferable being chosen conduces to the well being of the agent, while the pleasant or the agreeable being selected, one is debarred from the *summum bonum*.”<sup>3</sup> In this very incipient concept of *śreyah* (श्रेयः) one discovers the germ-plasm of that perfectionist ethics of *Śaṅkara-Vedānta* which stops nothing short of the Absolute, the high-water mark, the *ne plus ultra* (निःश्रेयसं) of perfection—wherein is given a quietus to all desiring and striving, there having survived no other desirable end excepting the oneness of Self<sup>4</sup> and, thus there having emerged the sense of self-realisedness or fulfilment of the supreme End of man (पुरुषार्थसमाप्तिवृत्तात्पक्षेः).<sup>5</sup> Such is the fullest import of the category of perfection as conceived in *Śaṅkara-Vedānta*—a category which rarely has justice administered to it in its application in the field of ethics and metaphysics. “The Absolute considered, as such,” says<sup>6</sup> Bradley

1 मनुष्य एव विशेषतोऽभ्युद्यनिःश्रेयससाधने अधिकृतः—Com. on Brhad. Up. I. vi. 10.

2 Chap. I, valli ii, verse 1.

3 अन्वच्छेदोऽन्यदुत्तेव प्रेयसे समे नानार्थे पुरुषं सिनीतः । तयोः श्रेय आदंदानस्य साधु भवति श्रियतेऽर्थाद्य उपेयो वृणीते ॥

4 न त्वात्मैकत्वव्यतिरेकीयावशिष्यमात्रोऽन्योऽर्थोऽस्ति य आकाङ्क्षेत—Com. on V.S. II. i. 14.

5 Com. on V.S. IV. iii. 14.

6 *Appearance and Reality*, p. 359.

in the true spirit of *Advaita-Vedānta*, "has of course no degrees ; for it is perfect, and there can be no more or less in perfection." Truly does Śaṅkara claim as the special excellence of his system the fact that in the attainment of the knowledge of the identity of the Self with Brahman, the *ens perfectissimum* as well as the *ens realissimum* of the Mediæval thinkers of Europe, the entire code of ethical duties is superseded and there ensues the feeling of self-realisedness.<sup>1</sup>

With a truly Kantian emphasis Śaṅkara opens the ethical enquiry with a rigid antithesis between the theoretical and practical reason, between the heteronomy of nature and the autonomy of the Spirit as being the essential pre-requisite of morals. In the first place, it is authoritatively laid down that all actions determined by empirical motives and uninspired by a vision of the supreme end must lead unto bondage, for all such actions are motivated by ignorance.<sup>2</sup> Hence what is initially needed is a complete breach with the life of unreflecting acquiescence in nature-necessity—the realm of darkness or ignorance which is the prolific source of all evil, moral and metaphysical—and a thorough grounding in the knowledge of the supreme End which is the only pathway to liberation (नान्यः पन्था इत्युच्यते). The function of ethics as a science is to call for, at the very start, a 'turning round of the eye of the soul,' a 'conversion' in the Platonic sense of the term, and to re-orient the whole hierarchy of means and ends in the light of the supreme end (पुरुषार्थः), the End *par excellence* of human life. Its business, however, is not, as Śaṅkara conceives it, to furnish 'copy-book headings' for the guidance of moral life or a codified list of duties ; and thus its function is neither legislative nor executive, but only informative or enlightening (ज्ञापकं हि शास्त्रं न तु कारकं). Man as a moral subject or agent cannot be commanded, he has to be drawn. Not coercion

1 अलक्षोरी ज्ञायमन्त्रात् यद्विज्ञावगती सत्या सर्वकर्मव्यताङ्गिनिः कृतकव्यता चेति—  
Com. on V.S. I. i. 4.

2 अविद्या कान्तयत एव सर्वानि कर्माणि—Com. on Bhagavad Gītā, II. 11.



but persuasion that is the only instrument of moral causation. Here emerges the most important postulate of ethics—freedom of the will on the part of man as a moral being.

Before we proceed to tackle that issue—on which the verdict of Sāṃkara-Vedānta is as unambiguous as it is authoritative—it will be worth our while to discuss the question of the raw materials of moral life, the entire gamut of natural appetites and inclinations on which alone, in all conceivability, the proposed free will of man is to be exercised in deference to the dictates of moral reason. Granted that freedom of the will is the inalienable birth-right and natural legacy of man, there is no escaping from the position that the *soi disant* free will cannot work *in vacuo*. Hence the importance and indispensable necessity of an original datum of non-moral impulses—instinctive preferences and aversions (रागद्वेषौ) as the basic pre-supposition of the moral life; and no system of moral idealism or purism can possibly expunge this original evil or ignorance (अनर्थः or अविद्या) as the natural heritage of man without a veritable *reductio ad absurdum* or an ethical suicide. Call it an original taint (कषायः) or an 'original sin', the thing remains there and has to be accepted, as such, in the very interest and efficiency of moral activity. This is the initial equipment with which the individual starts upon his career of moral probation. Now, 'man has been so constituted by the Creator with his senses outward-pointing that he naturally looks outward and never inwards. It is verily some wise man, hankering after the life eternal that could attain to a vision of the inner Self only with averted eyes, that is to say, with his senses withdrawn from their native outgoing operations.'<sup>1</sup> But to be so ruled by external empirical ends is to incur bondage and be led astray from the path of rectitude that terminates eventually in the

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1 परास्मिन् स्थानि व्युत्पद्यन् स्वयम्भूतत्वात् पराङ् पश्यति नान्तरात्मकम् । कश्चिद्भीरुः प्रत्यगात्मानमेवादातुं चक्षुरमुत्तलमिच्छन् ॥—Katha Upanishad, Chap. II. valli iv, verse i.

attainment of liberation. So urges Śaṅkara,<sup>1</sup> “a man acting intent on external things and making, the attainment of his own good or happiness and the repulsion or rejection of that which threatens the opposite *i.e.*, evil or unhappiness, the end, does not realise the *summum bonum* (although hankering after it); ‘the Self is to be intuited’ and such other scriptural texts have the effect of weaning away such a man (as is bent on realising the *summum bonum*) from the nature-prompted impulse towards objects ruled by causal necessity and directing or impelling him along the (psychical) flow in the direction of the inward Self.” This is what constitutes, in Kantian language, the ‘heteronomy of nature,’ so far man’s activity is determined solely by considerations of happiness, or unhappiness, that is, by ‘pathological’ motives, and this spells the bondage (बन्धः) of man, the very negation of freedom and thus an unmitigated evil alike to Śaṅkara and Kant. Accordingly, moral discipline or culture argues a violent wrenching of the mind, together with the entire sensory apparatus, from its natural outgoing activity, a resolute setting one’s face against the current of impulses and solicitations of sense, and thus a supreme almost superhuman effort in changing the current of natural inclinations in the direction of the inward Self.<sup>2</sup> It is along this path of self-discipline that man can hope to regain his Self—as he is in his essential nature—from which there has been a lapse. This process of erecting oneself above one’s self in order to attain one’s Self may appear to be not a little confusing to the student of *Advaita-Vedānta*. But all doubts and discrepancies on this score may be set at rest by means of a faithful reproduction of Śaṅkara’s own utterances on the matter. Every man is equipped *ab initio* with a stock

१ यो हि बहिर्मुखः प्रवर्तते पुरुष इष्टं मे भूयादिति मे मामुदित न च तन्मन्त्रानि पुरुषार्थं लभते, तन्मात्यन्तिकपुरुषार्थवाञ्छिनं स्वाभाविकात् कार्यकारणसंघातप्रवृत्तिगोचरात् विमुखीकृत्य प्रत्यगात्मसौतस्य प्रवर्तयन्त्यात्मा वा चरे द्रष्टव्य इत्यादीनि—Com. on V.S. I. i. 4.

२ नष्टता प्रज्ञासेन स्वाभावप्रवृत्तिनिरोधं कृत्वा प्रतिस्रोतः प्रवर्तनमिव प्रत्यगात्मानं पश्यति—Com. on *Kaṭha Uṇ.*, IV. 1.

of innate cravings and capacities surviving in him as the latent traces or dispositions of actions in a previous cycle of existence and constituting a part of his psychical make-up. This is what Śaṅkara calls the *prakṛti*, the instinctive basis of the psychic continuum, expressing itself invariably in certain organic cravings or peculiar likes and dislikes. In his commentary on a well-known couplet of the *Bhagavad-Geetā*,<sup>1</sup> which seems at first to be an apotheosis of *Prakṛti* with all the incidental ambiguities of Naturalism,—Śaṅkara steers clear of the insidious doctrine, and, with unerring psychological insight, takes his stand upon this psychical fact and converts it into the substructure of his idealistic or rationalistic theory to rest on. Says he, “that is *Prakṛti* or nature which expresses itself as the original endowment of an animal at the very beginning of its present existence, this being the resultant of latent dispositions accumulated from the past acts of merit or demerit ; and it is in accordance with such *prakṛti* that every animal even the intelligent (what to say of the ignorant?) person, energises.<sup>2</sup> ‘Every man according to his light’ is the motto here as elsewhere. There is, however, the other word *swabhāva* (स्वभावः) which is indiscriminately used as a synonym of *prakṛti* (प्रकृतिः) but on closer inspection it will be found that Śaṅkara stipulates for something additional in favour of the former. To quote his own words on the point :<sup>3</sup> “the intrinsic nature of the supreme Brahman is the inner Self in every organism, and thus by ‘one’s own nature’ is meant the spiritual (nature of man) ;

1 सद्दृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।

प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति ॥

—Chap. III, verse<sup>3</sup> 33.

2 प्रकृतिर्ज्ञानं पूर्वज्ञातधर्माधर्मादिसंस्कारो वर्तमानजन्मादावभिव्यक्तः सा प्रकृतिस्तस्याः सद्दृशमेव स्वर्णं जनुर्ज्ञानवानपि चेष्टते किं पुनमुर्ध्वः—Com. on *Bhagavad-Geeta*, Chap. III, verse 33.

3 तस्यैव परमस्य ब्रह्मणः प्रतिदिष्टं प्रत्यगात्मभावः स्वभाव इति स्वी भावः स्वभावोऽ-  
ध्यात्ममुच्यते आत्मानं हि दृढमधिकृत्य प्रत्यगात्मतया प्रवृत्तं परमार्थब्रह्मावसानं वस्तुं स्वभावोऽ-  
ध्यात्ममुच्यते अध्यात्मब्रह्मेनाभिधीयते—Com. on *Bhagavad-Geeta*, Chap. VIII, verse 3.

and by the word 'spiritual nature' is meant that being or essence which, extending beyond the body and soul, terminates, by way of the inner Self of all selves, in the supreme Brahman in its integral essence. Thus there has been brought out a nice distinction between the two: the word *prakṛti* being used with reference to the instinctive, non-moral, animal spontaneity, while the term *swabhāva* being reserved for the higher spontaneity of realised moral perfection. Clearly, one is used with retrospective reference to the potential, and the other with prospective reference to the actualised spiritual essence of man, in his progressive effort of self-realisation.

Now, whatever be the ambiguity lurking in Śaṅkara's usage of the term nature, *prakṛti* or *swabhāva*—although he has spared no pains to demarcate the respective scopes of each—he is unambiguously clear as regards the ultimate seat of all moral causality or the exercise of free will. All such power of self-determination or antonomy is unreservedly given over to man as a spiritual being, as *homo noumenon*, as a citizen of the *mundus intelligibilis*. This is the solution, offered by Śaṅkara, of the hopeless tangle besetting the 'free-will' controversy. With remarkable insight he lays his finger on the crucial question in this seemingly insoluble controversy. "Does this agency or causality" as Śaṅkara asks<sup>1</sup> so pertinently, "belong only to the so-called assemblage of conditions or concomitants of action, or does it originate in the sheer volition of a being, independent of this assemblage of conditions, as the driving power at the back of mind etc?" It is by means of the triple stratification of human nature into life, mind and spirit, that Śaṅkara-Vedānta has succeeded in providing a way out of this maze of controversy, into which it has been perpetually condemned by European writers on this theme, on account of their failure to rise above the plane of mind to which the tacit appeal always lies. Seldom do they stop to enquire whether the mind is equal to the task of discharging the obligation that

1 किं यथाप्रसिद्धमेव कार्यकरणसंघातस्य प्रेषयितुं, किंवा संघातव्यतिरेकस्य सतत्त्वस्य इत्यादिनामेव मनसादिप्रेषयितुम्?—Com. on *Kena Upanishad*, 1. 1.

is thrust upon it. It seems scarcely to have occurred to them that the mind may be, after all, as much mechanical as the sensory apparatus from which it is scrupulously distinguished, and that the partiality for mind as being non-mechanical or non-materialistic may turn out on closer analysis to be an illusion or at best a pious hope. Does not even the conceived possibility of a statics and mechanics of the soul cast a justified suspicion and slur on the self-complacent assertion : *mens agitat molem*? By following the line of least resistance, the mind, as confronted with equally powerful but conflicting motives, may, like Buridan's ass, shuffle into mechanical equilibrium—with the same mechanical necessity that characterises the laws of the dynamics of a particle. Where, then, does the alleged free causality lie? The *prima facie* evidence, however, is against the mind as a claimant for that agency or power. Śaṅkara's handling of this aspect of the theme is equally convincing and telling : "that the mind is not the independent (self-determining, free agency it has been pointed to be) in so far as it goes forth to court the sharpest pangs—the object of a natural aversion and avoidance—in spite of its being checked therein. Hence the enquiry 'by whom is it impelled' is a pertinent one."<sup>1</sup> Hence we must seek for the evidence of the play of free causality in some other direction. It is not in action, that comes about by following the line of least resistance, but in action in the face of the greatest resistance that we find the striking evidence of the alleged freedom of man as a spiritual, and not merely mind-endowed, being. To quote his final verdict on the point:<sup>2</sup> "hence this is said to be the object of human free will—the (original, unregenerate) nature of man, which is conditioned by attachment and aversion, impels a man to pursue a particular line of conduct.....while

१ मनः न स्वतन्त्रं प्रवृत्तिनिवृत्तिविषये अत्युद्युःखे कार्ये वार्यमाणमपि पतति मनः । तस्मात् युक्त एव कीर्तयितमिति प्रश्नः—*Ibid.*

२ तद्वार्थं पुण्यकारणं विषयं उच्यते.....या हि पुण्यस्य प्रकृतिः सा रागद्वेषपुरःसरैव स्वकार्ये पुण्यं प्रवर्तयति...यदा पुनः रागद्वेषौ तत्प्रतिपक्षेण नियमयति, तदा शास्त्रदृष्टिरेव पुण्यो भवति न प्रकृतिवशः—*Com. on Bhagavad Geetā*, Chap. III. verse 34.

a man who resolutely sets his face against these (instinctive) attachments and aversions, becomes endowed with a spiritual vision and thus not subject to nature-necessity (and therefore free).'' But this negative or inhibitory movement of self-discipline is not the last word of moral life. This entire set of natural outgoing impulses is to be moralised and disciplined only by restraining them in the path of rectitude and thereby pressing them into the service of the moral life (कार्यकारणसंघातस्य स्वभावेन सर्वतः प्रवृत्तस्य सन्ताने एव निरोधः कर्तव्यः).<sup>1</sup> This fully attests 'the expulsive power of a higher affection'—the centre of gravity having been shifted from a merely negative to a positive aspect of spiritual culture and realisation.

This naturally leads to the question of *Moksha* (मोक्षः) or Redemption as the Life Eternal (ब्रह्मभावश्च मोक्षः) and the disciplines incidental thereto (मोक्षसाधनानि). It is, admittedly, the supreme end (परमपुरुषार्थः), the *ne plus ultra* of human Good which goes beyond good and evil of ethical valuation and empirical existence; and that is just the reason why at this point individualism is at its strongest with distracting varieties of opinion regarding the supreme Good, and the accessory means of realising it. Now, the stable ground, that emerges from among the shifting scenes of view-points, and to which all alike appeal, as their inevitable pre-supposition, is that the ideal of Vedāntic ethics is self-realisation, the attainment of happiness—which is but the feeling of self-realisedness—being a necessary concomitant thereof. Accordingly, there must needs be differences in the formulation of the supreme end and its unfailing co-efficients, depending, as they do, on the nature of the self (which, in the language of mathematics, may be called an 'independent variable') as conceived in the different schools of Vedānta. Now we are fairly familiar with the notion of 'self' as obtaining in the different schools of Vedānta. The concept of 'end' or 'good', together with that of 'happiness,' as current in the Śaṅkara-Vedānta school, has been very ably dealt with by the author of the *Vedāntāparibhāṣā* in the last

<sup>1</sup> Com. on B. G. II. 50.

'chapter of the book. Having defined '*prayojanam*' as 'that which being known is desired as the mode of one's psychical existence' (यद्वदन्तं सत् स्वहृत्तया इच्छते तत् प्रयोजनम्), the *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* classifies 'ends' under two heads: primary or direct and secondary or indirect, happiness and absence of misery being the primary, and all else standing in an accessory or instrumental relation to one of these being the secondary end.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, happiness which, though not perhaps 'our being's end and aim,' something 'for which we bear to live, or dare to die,' is yet accorded even by the rigoristic Kant the due share of its importance in the framing of the *summum bonum*, is here with scrupulous honesty acknowledged to be the primary or ultimate end of action. The bliss that is thus contemplated is not merely the absence of pain or misery—something purely negative in character as in the orthodox Sāṃkhya formulation of it—but demands the attainment of positive happiness, there being no proxy to answer for it *in absentia*. Now, happiness, as the *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* has it, admits of a two-fold division into relative or empirical and absolute or transcendental; one arising from the contact with external objects and admitting of more or less through differences of mental functioning, while the other is the *ne plus ultra* of happiness which is Brahman itself.<sup>2</sup> Following this line of reflexion, *Moksha* or the state of redemption is defined as the attainment of Brahman which is the very essence of *Ānanda* or bliss and the consequent negation of all suffering or misery (आनन्दात्मक ब्रह्मावाप्तिश्च मोक्षः शोकनिवृत्तिश्च). This at once disposes of the misconstructions of *Moksha* as the attainment of another world, or empirical happiness arising therefrom; for, on all such hypothesis, *moksha* becomes contingent on activity, and hence unenduring or mutable, and that, again,

1 तस्य [प्रयोजनं] द्विविधं—मुख्यं गौणश्चेति । तत्र सुखदुःखाभावौ मुख्ये प्रयोजने, तदन्तरसाधनं गौणं प्रयोजनम् ।

2 सुखञ्च द्विविधं...सातिशयं निरतिशयश्चेति । तत्र सातिशयं सुखं विषयानुर्धन-जनितात्कारस्वहृत्तितारतम्यज्ञतानन्दस्वेष्टाविर्भावविशेषः 'एतस्यैवानन्दस्यान्यत्र न भूतानि नात्रानुपजीवन्ति' इत्यादि युतेः । निरतिशयं सुखं ब्रह्मेव, 'आनन्दो ब्रह्मेतिव्यजानात्' 'विज्ञानंभानन्दं ब्रह्म' इत्यादि युतेः ।

entailing the relapse of the liberated into the mundane cycle of existence.<sup>1</sup> If it be argued that such a view of *Moksha*, as the Life Eternal, as a *fait accompli*, dispenses with 'human effort in the matter of attaining the highest good of man, Śaṅkara would rebut the force of the criticism in his characteristically ingenious manner. Like a veritable *savyasācī*, fighting with both hands with equal dexterity, he repels the missiles of the pragmatists on the one hand, and of the adherents of the doctrine of 'election' or Divine grace on the other. Uncompromising in his demand, he refuses to give quarters to the pragmatists who delude themselves into believing that they can secure the highest good by scrupulously following the code of injunctions and prohibitions and performing sacrifices. Following in the footsteps of the Upanishadic sages, Śaṅkara unhesitatingly declares that these are but frail resources like insecure rafts, in the matter of crossing the bar of mundane existence into the land of Life Everlasting (इवा ज्ञेते बहदा यत्तत्त्वाः). That blessed state, which is, assuredly, the object of a perpetual quest, is not created *pari passu* with the act of searching after it. The highest good of a man is, for aught we know, something that is not empirical,—neither capable of being produced (उत्पाद्यः), nor of being modified (विकार्यः), nor of being improved upon (संस्कार्यः), either by way of an accretion of its excellence (गुणाधानेन) or removal of defects (दोषापनयनेन वा).<sup>2</sup> Here the ingrained realism (वस्तुतन्त्रता) of Śaṅkara-Vedānta stands it in good stead in respect of a counter-movement to the mystic or pragmatic quest of a Good that never is, but 'evermore about to be.' Such a good may masquerade as the good of man on a lower plane of existence, but it is made grotesque when it is thrust into the place of the supreme. The *bonum consummatum*, the supreme Good of man, because it is supreme, cannot be contingent upon anything else, but unconditionally and absolutely is. On the other hand, Śaṅkara was far too securely grounded

1 न हि लोकान्तरावाप्तिः तज्जन्यवैषयिकानन्दो वा मोक्षः तस्य कृतकत्वेन अनित्यत्वे  
मुक्तस्य पुनरावस्थापत्तेः।

2 Corp. on V.S. I. 1. iv.



in the moral point of view to unsettle or discount its influence and importance, and to imperil the efficiency of moral exertions in the matter of attaining the highest good. *Moksha* is not a matter of catastrophic attainment, descending from the above upon a man in accordance with an inscrutable Providence, but is a matter of progressive realisation through the steady cancellation of that nescience which has deprived him *ab initio* of this priceless legacy. Even if it be a fruit beyond all good and evil to be enjoyed, it is the fruit of a tree whose roots are laid deep down in the soil of the moral life of perpetual stress and strain, of ethical aspiration and endeavour. Truly speaking, it is a sphere where 'the heart knoweth its own bitterness and a stranger doth not intermeddle with its joys and sorrows.' Every man, by his own individual exertions, must carve out his own spiritual destiny ; there is no vicarious suffering or redemption for the matter of that. Verily, 'the soul that sinneth it shall die.' Such is the solitariness of the moral life—assuredly 'a flight of the alone to the Alone.' Indeed, Śaṅkara was constitutionally incapable of invoking a consummation, which would in any way neutralise or stultify the life of ethical struggles and attainment. The highest good comes, be it remembered, not 'to destroy but to fulfil.

Where, then, is left the room for human activity and exertion in the matter of attaining *Moksha* ? If *moksha* is an eternally accomplished fact, there is conceivably no useful purpose served by the perpetual injunction of *śravaṇa*, *manana*, and *nididhyāsana*, of Śruti texts and the impulse to all these is paralysed at the very start. Does it then lead to a life of inaction, a *laissez faire*, or encourage a happy-go-lucky sort of life ? The *Vedānta-paribhāṣā* sets at rest any such implication of the Śaṅkara-Vedānta doctrine of redemption. Moral effort or exertion is not rendered nugatory, seeing that there is room for activity in cancelling the illusion of an unaccomplished *moksha*, which as identical with Brahman is eternally accomplished.<sup>1</sup> Even on the empirical plane the need is frequently

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१ सिङ्गल ब्रह्मसूत्रस्य मोक्षस्य असिद्धत्वं चर्त्तयितुं तत्साधने प्रयत्नोपपत्तेः—Chap. VIII.

felt of re-realisation of what has been already realised and the re-rejection of what has been already rejected (बोकेऽपि प्राप्तप्राप्ति-परिहृत परिहारयोः प्रयोजनत्वं दृष्टमेव). Indeed to possess a thing and not to be conscious of the possession amount to not possessing the thing at all. Just as a person, oblivious of the necklace round the neck, goes about looking for it and leaves no stone unturned to discover it, and eventually comes into a virgin possession of the thing (अप्राप्तमिव प्राप्नोति), on being reminded of it, so also here. Similarly in the case of one who mistakes an encircling garland round his feet for a snake—surely a pathological case—there is the re-rejection, on the testimony of others that this is not a snake, of the snake that is from the very start absent.<sup>1</sup> This is one of those points of crucial importance which justify Max Müller's characterisation of Vedānta as 'the native philosophy of India.' The plausibility of the statement is heightened all the more when we find that this tenet of Saṃkhya-Vedānta does not impress the Indian mind with a remote academic aloofness, but it has made its way into the best of our folk-literature, or to rehearse Max Müller's verdict, has 'leavened' our language and forms 'to the present day the common property of the people at large.' One need not go far to look for its evidences.

This is unmistakably the source of inspiration for the popular saying:—“नाभ कसल्ले जाय कसूरी कैसे भरम टुटे पयकारे”, i.e., “Musk lies in the navel of the musk-deer, how, then, can the animal get rid of its illusion?” Surely these are words that stick in the memory and help towards a better orientation of our mystic quest. We have seen how Hegel brought himself up, without being, however, conscious of the fact, into a substantial agreement with the Vedāntic position of an eternally accomplished ideal. It is only Mc Taggart, as one of the most faithful of the neo-Hegelians, who has the sufficiency and intellectual honesty to acknowledge the lead of his master and

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1 यथा वा वल्लितचरणायां खनि संपलभनवतः ‘नाभं संपं’ इत्याप्तवाक्यात् परिहृतस्यैव संपं परित्कारः—*Vedānta-paribhāṣā*, Chap. VIII.

draw the only reasonable conclusion that one can draw from Hegel's premises. "*Sub specie æternitatis*" so he puts it, "every self is perfect. '*Sub specie temporis*, it is progressing towards a perfection as yet unattained.'"<sup>1</sup> Śaṅkara would heartily endorse this statement but subject to the proviso that the perfection in question is no other than the cancellation of an illusion which dwells in a mid-region between reality and unreality.

Now it must be admitted that in the light of the central principle of Śaṅkara-Vedānta the whole scaffolding of the Vedāntic ethics, together with all the sciences of epistemology, psychology—all the disciplines of the human mind, theoretical or practical are involved in one common ruin as being infected with, and conditioned by *avidyā* or nescience.<sup>2</sup> It is true that Śaṅkara himself acknowledges that the authority of all these sciences continues unchallenged until *advaitajñāna* that has the redemptive grace in it dawns upon the soul. But what is, in all conscience, the significance and validity of an *Interimsethik* of this kind. Is it not, by the damaging admission of the *Advaita-Vedānta* with its predilection for the Absolute as the sole reality, driven to a very precarious existence? Does not an all-pervasive relativism of Śaṅkara-Vedānta sound the death-knell of all ethics with its claim to the categorical and unconditional character of its laws? But that would be going too far. To say that the ethical maxims, the code of injunctions and prohibitions are relative to my station in life—relative to the embodied existence of my self—is not to invalidate or impair the absoluteness and authority of the moral distinctions. Relativity, it should be noted, is not relativism. When, therefore, Prof. Keith alleges that there is not the faintest glimmering of ethics in the Upanishads, and that it is people with an

<sup>1</sup> Mind (N.S.) Vol. xi. p. 388.

<sup>2</sup> तमेतमविद्याख्यानात्मनात्मनोरितरितराध्यासं पुरस्कृत्य सर्वे प्रमाणप्रमेयव्यवहारा  
लौकिका वैदिकाश्च ग्रन्थाः सर्वाणि च विधिप्रतिषेधनीयपराणि—*Introduction to the*  
*Vedānta-Sūtras*.

initial bias for Absolute Idealism who read an ethical import into the Upanishadic texts that are non-moral, we have to pause and consider without being irritated by that kind of criticism. Let us face the issue fair and square. It is assuredly a grave indictment but it is an indictment that resolves itself into a more general one—namely, the possibility of there being at all any ethics in a system of Absolute Idealism, Eastern or Western. Now no one would for a moment entertain the plausibility of the charge as applied to the Hegelian version, for example, of Absolute Idealism. The real moot-point does not lie there. So far as we take our stand on a pure psychological ethics, such sceptical objections must assail us. But a science of ethics must either consummate itself in a metaphysic of ethics or disintegrate into scepticism or relativism which spells the very death of all ethics. Whatever Leslie Stephen might think with regard to the function of a science of ethics, ethics is undoubtedly inseparable from metaphysics and it needs no 'ingenious sophistry' to force them into relation.

Indeed, for the Vedānta at least the question of ethics centres in the reality of self, and this is confessedly metaphysical. The issue concerning the nature of self or self-realisation is one that traverses the entire range of Christian *versus* pre-Christian mode of thinking. As Prof. Pringle-Pattison phrases this momentous issue: "The essential feature of the Christian conception of the world, in contrast to the Hellenic, may be said to be that it regards the person and the relations of persons to one another as the essence of reality, whereas Greek thought conceived of personality, however spiritual, as a restrictive characteristic of the finite—a transitory product of a life which as a whole is impersonal. Modern Absolutism seems, in this respect, to revert to the pre-Christian mode of conception, and to repeat also the too exclusively intellectualistic attitude, which characterizes Greek thought in the main."<sup>1</sup> What is affirmed here of Modern Absolutism, or for the matter of that, of the pre-Christian, pagan or Hellenic thought, applies

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<sup>1</sup> *Idea, of God.* p. 291.

*mutatis mutandis* to Śaṅkara's absolutism which, as presenting the notion of individuality or personality in too exclusively intellectualistic terms, errs, if at all, in no less honourable company, so far as it also subscribes to the 'episodic' as well as restrictive nature of finite self-hood or personality.

After all is said and done, it remains to be seen whether Prof. Pringle-Pattison himself has not at times strained his logic to the breaking-point or compromised his monistic persuasion in philosophy in his stainless allegiance to the 'profound personalism of Christianity' which is the acknowledged source of his inspiration and the special teaching of his revered teacher A. C. Fraser. Moreover, on a general survey of Prof. Pringle-Pattison's part in this acute controversy, it may not unreasonably appear that it becomes in the end a verbal one, turning as it does on the interpretation put upon that highly ambiguous word 'self'. To begin with, he intimates his agreement in advance with the rejection of the notion of 'the personal self as an exclusive entity, simply living out a nature of its own.' Then he proceeds to say that 'nothing could be truer' than to say, as Bosanquet does, that "we are finite which means incomplete, and not fitted to be absolute ends. We must have something greater than our finite selves to contemplate. We want something above us, something to make us dare and do and hope to be," for this "is the familiar paradox of the ethical and religious life, dying to live, self-realization through self-sacrifice, self-development through absorption in objective interest and in the currents of the universal life."<sup>1</sup> Lastly, in quoting with evident approval one of Bosanquet's characteristic utterances on the nature of finite self to the effect that 'a true self is something to be made and won, to be held together with pains and labour, not something given to be enjoyed,' he seems to have gone rather too far to 'recede' to his initial position with regard to the conservation of the finite self as such. If, as he thinks, 'an exaggerated emphasis

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 294.

upon' this question of immortality—not to speak of the 'personal' type of it—'tends to become 'unhealthy,' may not the same logic be extended to the case of 'personality' which as bound up with 'the hope of immortality' is admittedly, one of those 'secondary and inferential things' on which 'we cannot afford to stake our whole position'?<sup>1</sup> Clearly, Prof. Pringle-Pattison has not been able to make out a case for preferential treatment of 'personality' as distinct from that meted out to 'personal immortality.' It is his ethical predilections that dictate terms to his logic, and he eventually plays false to it and prevaricates the issue. The logic of idealism, truly conceived and faithfully carried out to its ultimate consequences with vertical consistency cannot stop short with a 'Personal Idealism' of which Prof. Pringle-Pattison among many others is the notable exponent in the West. Indeed, the phrase is a misnomer; that is probably why Bosanquet, the impenitent and uncompromising idealist, denies to such a type of thinking the philosophic consecration of 'idealism' and calls it merely 'Personalism' and that an 'irrational' one, in as much as Prof. Pringle-Pattison abandons the lead of logic and reason, and develops in a centrifugal direction the ethical concept of Personality without reckoning with the centripetal force of an idealistic metaphysics. Such a type of metaphysical thinking will at once be branded 'as ethically inspired metaphysics' and, therefore as bad metaphysics, by Mr. Bertrand Russell, and the arraignment is quite justified. You may or may not choose to play the game of idealistic thinking, but once you join it, you cannot play as you choose. Remaining strictly loyal to the spirit of the 'whole', as Bosanquet would say, Idealism must needs consider the claims of logic to be absolute and paramount, and pay its hostages to this 'jealous' God, and no other; that is, in other words idealism cannot stop at a half-way house like Personal Idealism but must advance along the same road until it finds a final resting-place in Absolute Idealism. Indeed, the issue in contemporary philo-

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 44-5.

sophy between Absolute Idealism and Personal Idealism is really the competition of logical categories with ethical ones, for a supremacy and absolutism—to the extent of being the determinant of a metaphysical construction. ,

## LECTURE XII.

### THE CULTURAL VALUE OF THE VEDĀNTA: A RETROSPECT.

If philosophy, as we believe, is a matter of illumination or *Ādarśanam*, a world-view or *Weltanschauung*, its importance as a factor in general culture can hardly be overestimated. What forces this fact into a well-deserved prominence is Max Müller's description of the Vedānta as 'the native philosophy of India'—a description that may, in all fairness, be said to form the keynote of this course of lectures. Nothing could be a more accurate description of the Vedānta philosophy, philosophy, being in ultimate analysis, only life brought to the focus of self-consciousness. In appraising the net values of these world-views or philosophies, one must, however, remember that the 'views of the world which proceed from the spirits of different ages, as products of the general development of culture, are not so much thoughts as rhythms in thinking, not theories but modes of intuition saturated with feelings of worth.' Accordingly, a systematic survey of these world-views as they appear in their historical succession, or to put it briefly, a history of philosophy has to avoid two extremes; that of a rigid pan-logism, such as that of Hegel, proceeding from an over-emphasis on the logical factor, and secondly, that of lawless individualism following upon an undue stressing of the individual or personal factor in the framing of these. Proceeding on the assurance that the different systems of philosophy are not merely a 'motley collection of opinions of various learned gentlemen' but the limited process in which the categories have successively attained distinct consciousness and the form of consciousness, Hegel ends by making the whole procession of these world-views appear as 'the unearthly ballet of bloodless categories.' But what Hegel forgot to reckon in preparing his balance-sheet is that it is the whole man that philosophizes, not his understanding merely, and that at the back of the logical factor there stand certain



invisible, and therefore all the more invincible, forces—psychical and historical—which though alogical in the main are nevertheless stronger than all logic. Life, as the standing refutation of the law of formal logic that we cannot go beyond the premises, always vindicates its character as something more than logic. In truth the historical movement of philosophy “depends not solely upon the thinking of ‘humanity’ or even the ‘Weltgeist’, but just as truly upon the reflections, the needs of mind and heart, the presaging thought and sudden flashes of insight, of philosophising individuals.” The one essential aberration of Hegel’s analysis—fundamentally correct as it is—consists in the unwarrantable assumption that the chronological order in which the categories have presented themselves in the historical systems of philosophy must necessarily correspond to the logical order in which the same categories should appear as ‘elements of truth’, which is in the keeping of a final system of philosophy—of course, his own. Not inaptly, therefore, does Bradley observe that a ‘true philosophy cannot justify its own apotheosis. Nay, from the other side the metaphysician might lament his own destiny. His pursuit condemns him, he may complain, himself to herd with unreal essences and to live an outcast from life. It is three times more blessed, he may well repeat, to be than to think. But in such a mood the man would so far fall away from philosophy. A true philosophy must accept and justify every side of human nature, including itself.’<sup>1</sup> No less risky is the accentuation of the personal or alogical factor, which tends to inaugurate the reign of lawless individualism in the domain of philosophical thought. We are not introduced here to a haphazard collection of opinions and random statements but to an all-embracing world-view of that great Individual, the *Grand Être* of Humanity. This is not, however, within the easy reach of a European side-view of Humanity,—such as we have, for example, in Windelband who announces under the palpable influence of a characteristic *idolum tribus*—that the ‘History of Philosophy is the process

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<sup>1</sup> *Essays on Truth and Reality*, pp. 13-14.

in which European humanity has embodied in scientific conception its views of the world and its judgments of life.<sup>1</sup> It might, however, be pleaded in defence that the two epithets 'European' and 'scientific' are mutually convertible terms, and, as such, in a statement of fact, there can be no insinuation of an invidious distinction within Humanity. But, then, the alleged fact may not itself be an accredited fact, and it may eventually turn out to be a discredited fact. The equation in question, arbitrary as it is, is still open to question, and one can pertinently ask: 'Who shall arbitrate'? Now, it is in the recognition of a *tertium quid*—the cultural factor—that there is provided a bulwark against the aberrations of a pan-logism and individualism in the reading of the views of the world. Uniting, as it does, the complementary half-truths in these one-sided methods, it has the efficacy of stressing the all-important truth that the development of philosophy is not the only aim of the world-process but a part of the universal aim operative therein. Viewed in this light, the individual philosopher appears to be as much the product as the creator of the age he lives in, and thus is justified the claim both of the logical and the alogical factor. As shaping forces in the history of civilisation, these world-views are to be regarded not so much as doctrines or results of reflection, as postulates or vital reactions. On that understanding the 'Greek view of the world is as classic as the plastic art of Phidias and the epic of Homer ; the Christian, as eternally valid as the architecture of the Middle Ages ; the modern, as irrefutable as Goethe's poetry and the music of Beethoven.'<sup>2</sup>

Accordingly, misled essentially are those who swear by a 'disinterested intellectual curiosity' as the sole inspirer of philosophic pursuits, and charge Indian philosophy, all and sundry, with a betrayal of intellectual trust so far as it represents philosophical activities in an instrumental relation to *Moksha* or redemption from all the miseries of existence as the highest good (परमपुरुषार्थः) of man. Indeed, subserviency to interests

<sup>1</sup> A *History of Philosophy*, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Falckenberg, *History of Philosophy* (Eng. Trans.) Introduction.

other than strictly theoretical must needs be judged a serious disqualification on the part of a philosophical inquirer. But, then, a true philosophy, as Bradley reminds us so often, can not, without shamefully abandoning the charge committed to its care, make an apothecosis of the purely theoretical impulse. It is called upon to justify every side of human nature and thus to substantiate the pledge initially held out. Well might those that espouse the forlorn cause of Indian philosophy, and of Vedānta in particular claim, in the language of Śaṅkara, that this is its very individuality, or peculiar excellence, if you please (अलंकारी ज्ञयनञ्चाकं यद्वन्नञ्चावगतौ सत्या सर्व-  
कार्यव्यताङ्गानिः कृतकृत्यता चेति), that all the values of life, theoretical or practical are grounded in one consummate value (परमपुरुषार्थः). All the systems of Indian philosophy, whatever their respective persuasions, acknowledge the supremacy of one such intrinsic value, and present the whole set of values in a graded hierarchy terminating in the supreme. Without such a systematisation or co-ordination of the values, a philosophical system forfeits its title to that appellation. Indeed, for better or for worse, system-building has ever been in the blood of Indian thinkers, and as a rule Indian philosophy has been either a system or nothing at all. After all, it is quite in the fitness of things that the logical Idea along with the passion for a theoretical consistency and disinterested intellectual curiosity should be acclaimed the sovereign master in the realm of intellectual achievements. While it is proper to insist on the virtues of a disinterested intellectual curiosity or love of truth for its own sake, it is well to remember that it can easily be overdone or made a fetish of. This 'disinterested intellectual curiosity,' be it further remembered, is itself an interest, akin to the Platonic *εἰσως*, and unless provided with safeguards, it is too apt to degenerate into an obsession. Nowhere does this fixation reveal itself in a more unalloyed and concentrated form than in 'a free man's worship' which, according to, Mr. Bertrand Russell, should draw its inspiration from what he terms with the force of an epigram 'the gospel of unyielding despair.' Now, whatever we may choose to think of its merits as a

philosophical dissertation, there is no gain-saying the point that it is destined to rank, by the sheer force of its 'austere beauty' and stylistic charm, if not, also, in respect of its philosophic depth, or vigour, as one of the masterpieces of English literature, and, as surely, as one of the philosophical classics of our age. These, combined with the contagious passion for passionlessness, —an emotional frigidity or apathy, as the very quintessence of Stoic wisdom—account for the hypnotic spell cast on every reader of this philosophical essay. But the discerning and self-possessed student can hardly fail to notice that the passion for disinterested intellectual curiosity and a standardised theoretical consistency appears *in excelsis* and is, so to speak, running riot here. We may or may not subscribe to Bradley's contention that the demand for theoretical consistency, which mutilates the substance of religion, starts from error in principle and leads, in the result to practical discord or sterility.<sup>1</sup> But there is absolutely no justification for that sorry exhibition, and that in the name of intellectual probity and scientific disinterestedness, of that spirit of bravado and 'sham heroism' that lie on the surface of the 'gospel of unyielding despair.' There is evidently more wisdom in the sage counsel: "Because thou must not dream, thou needst not then despair!" The emancipation of the intellect from 'desire,' its 'last prison-house,' is, admittedly, a salutary advice so far as it goes, but one has to see that it does not go too far, and end by throwing away the babe along with the bath. A relentless rejection of all petty, private interests, and the cultivation of a temper of judicial neutrality must undoubtedly be put in the forefront as being an essential pre-requisite of the pursuit of truth; for these alone have the efficacy of purifying the intellect, and predisposing it in such a way as to make it a fit recipient of truth. But in carrying out this purificatory rite, one stands in danger of making a holocaust of the abiding or permanent interests, in a word, the values along with the changing or ephemeral interests of life, and thus carrying the process beyond the

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<sup>1</sup> *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 432.

saturation-point of a total indifferentism. There is surely 'no heroism in renouncing things which a man has no right to renounce ; nor is there any moral grandeur—and, if there be one got up, it is a fictitious one—about a martyrdom that is as gratuitous as it is fool-hardy. "It is vain" as Kant reminds us, "to profess indifference to those questions to which the mind of man can never really be indifferent." Indeed, there is such a thing as 'ostentatious poverty'—the classic prototype of which we have in the meeting of Diogenes the Cynic with Plato the intellectual aristocrat. When, the *nil admirari* cynic visited Plato in the latter's house, he is said to have called out to the latter to the following effect: "Look here, Plato ; thus do I tread on your carpet". "But not without a pride" was the smart reply of the other who is reported to have followed it up with the remark: "I see into your pride through the holes in your jacket". Now, whose was the victory?—Of the aggressive, world-renouncing cynic, or of the unostentatious philosopher-king? The verdict of history has not left it a dubious issue. The anecdote is, however, not without a moral for us. If, we care to read between the lines of 'a free man's worship'—without allowing ourselves to be carried away by its insidious rhetoric—we should detect in it a morbid passion for passionlessness, a sentimental yearning for martyrdom for its own sake which has neither sanity nor seemliness about it. 'But if martyrdom is to be proclaimed as a gospel for man, it must be more than courageous ; it must be in the best sense wise and profitable.'<sup>1</sup> Such is the inevitable response to Mr. Russell's delusive gospel of renunciation that 'for man..... it remains only to cherish, ere yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day;.....proudly defiant of the irresistible forces that tolerate, for a moment, his knowledge and his condemnation, to sustain alone, a weary but unyielding Atlas, the world that his own ideals have fashioned despite the trampling march of unconscious power.' This is unmistakably one of those typical passages which mark him out as a con-

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<sup>1</sup> Perry, *Present Philosophical Tendencies*, p. 346.

summate artist, whose appeal lies not so much in any lure of intellectualism, but in the æsthetic effect produced by words of chiselled beauty and vivid imagery. While, therefore, we feel unconvinced by his logic, Mr. Russell impresses us with a peculiar persuasiveness that defies analysis into reasons. Indeed, it is only by straining the resources of language,—of the words ‘gospel’ and ‘worship’—that the ‘gospel of unyielding despair’ can be made to serve as the keynote of a ‘free man’s worship.’ Truly, it is neither deserving of the name of ‘worship’ nor that of a ‘free man’. On the one hand, the ‘proud defiance’ inherent herein is at the farthest remove from the attitude of worship; on the other, a stupefying admiration for, and a craven submission or resignation to an ‘unconscious power’ trampling on our cherished ideals give the lie direct to the spirit of worship, and that of a ‘free man’. The ‘gospel of unyielding despair’ is not the gospel of a ‘free man’, but of a bondsman, enchained like Prometheus to the bed-rock of naturalism, unrelieved by the Promethean spark of the Ideal. ‘Fear of the Lord’ it has been well said ‘is the beginning of all wisdom.’ But it is, be it remembered, only the beginning—and neither the end nor the essence of wisdom. Thus, the fear of relentless matter rolling along—and, as the psychologist will assert, the proud defiance is but the paralysing fear turned inside out—may mark the beginning of an intellectual curiosity, but it is, in the end, conducive neither to intellectual uplift, nor religious edification. The cult of spiritual worship must necessarily be in a minor key, where worship thrives by thus working upon the instinct of fear, and man sinks into the comparative insignificant position of a mere ‘tooth in the wheel’, forfeiting eventually the right to record his approval or disapproval of the ways of this unconscious power. This attitude might readily fall in with the modernist craze for the ‘Renaissance of instinct’ with its gospel of *la bête humaine*, but it lacks the essentially human note of that elevating trust in the spiritual dignity of man, which is the best ministration to religious worship. Summarily speaking, the sense of being thus overwhelmed and awed into submission by an unconscious, albeit stupendous, power, and

the sense of defeatism, born of despair, and the consequent deification of the natural or the actual give the lie direct to the attitude of worship.

The ingrained intellectualism of Mr. Russell's standpoint has been, as we know, steadily on the increase, and, in his latest writings, it shows itself to be on the verge of bankruptcy, and stultifying itself by a veritable *reductio ad absurdum*. It appeared in *excelsis* in the course of lectures he delivered, under the auspices of the British Philosophical Institute during the Lent term of 1928. The course was entitled 'Philosophy of Physics,' and although some portion of it has been incorporated in his *Analysis of Matter*, the course was of a more sketchy character, and therefore too intellectual to be intelligible to the ordinary student uninitiated into the intricacies of mathematical logic. At the conclusion of one of these evening discourses (which I had been regularly attending)—and this was on the nature of Substance—one elderly gentleman, an artist by profession took the lead during the question-time and made the telling remark: "I have followed with rapt attention the frame-work of the Physical universe which the lecturer this evening has unscrolled before our admiring eyes. But when I am told in the name of a Philosophy of Physics to believe that my wife sitting next to me is a mere 'formula' representing a group of events in the series— $x + f_1(x) dt + f_2(x) dt^2 + \dots$

$f_1(x)$  being a continuous function of time, it sends a thrill of horror through my blood." The whole house burst into a peal of laughter but the redoubtable Mr. Russell rose equal to the occasion and replied with a characteristic smile: "I cannot help it: such is in the abstract the character of the universe, and I was not consulted at the time of its creation."

Apart from the humour of the situation, there is a candid confession in Mr. Russell's retort here, as to the real character of intellectualism. In his vocabulary the intellectual, or the scientific method, for the matter of that, is the method of analysis and abstraction. And it is in the sense of a vicious abstractionism that the charge of intellectualism has been, curiously enough, pressed against the *Upanishads* and the

*Advaita-Vedānta* in general. Thus, there is a *volte face*, a complete change of front, so far as it is maintained that here at least one system of Indian philosophical thought lays exclusive emphasis upon contemplation, or *θεωρία*, without making the intellectual impulse subservient to some other end,—as all the other systems do as a rule. What these somewhat contradictory rulings plainly reveal is the hollowness of the indictment on both the counts—of anti-intellectualism and intellectualism—as pressed against Indian philosophy. Does not this procedure on the part of critics lend countenance to the suspicion that any stick is good enough to beat a dog with? Admitting, under protest, the force of the contention that Indian philosophy has not always lived up to the ideal of theoretical consistency or intellectual curiosity, one may yet reply that the charge cannot be maintained at least against Śrīharsha's *Khaṇḍanakhāṇḍa Khāḍyam*, or in a wider reference, against the thinkers of the Neo-logical (*Navya Nyāya*) school in the face of their dialectical *finesse* wherein the urge of intellectual curiosity has been pursued rigorously—perhaps with a vengeance. After all, it must be admitted that the main drift of Indian philosophy has been in the direction of a subordination of the logical values, along with others, to one Supreme Good, and decisively against the absolute authority or paramount claims of the intellectual ideal. In the West, however, this has never been the case—with the exception, however of one brief interlude of philosophical thinking. But in India at least philosophical thought has never been an intellectual pastime merely, cut off from the moorings of all other values of life. Free thinking in the sense of an unchartered freedom to indulge in polemics for their own sake has seldom found favour with the Indian mind. This is a fact that has to be accepted as such, and let not the judgment be surreptitiously converted into a judgment upon fact. Just as there can be no disputing about tastes, so also there can be no comparative evaluation in this matter. ,

No less confusing, on this very score, is the uncritical application to Indian philosophy, of the technique of philo-



sophical thought and critical evaluation obtaining in the West. While an exaggerated sense of, and scrupulous regard for, the individuality of Indian thought and culture that defies comparison with all else is, to say the least of it, dogmatic and unphilosophical, it is no less reprehensible to make an off-hand use of such epithets as 'rationalistic,' 'intellectual' or 'anti-intellectualistic' in the matter of describing the position of Indian thinkers. Quite apart from the fact that philosophical labels are essentially misleading, the chances of misdirection on the part of these labels become all the greater when the canons of criticism are exotic in origin, and, therefore, must needs undergo some transformation in meaning as taken out of their proper context. It is a commonplace,—amounting almost to a truism—of all comparative studies, but it is more honoured in the breach than in the observance. Accordingly, when we have recourse to such descriptive phrases as 'Śaṅkara is a rationalist' or 'a revelationist in the service of orthodoxy' or even 'a scholastic expounding theological dogmatics' and the like, seldom do we pause to consider whether we are not sometimes straining the resources of language beyond their breaking-point. The enormity of this procedure reaches its climax when, in appraising an old system of thought, we conveniently forget the interval of time that separates it from us, and apply our standards and canons of criticism to it. Following this questionable method, critics have not infrequently tabooed the philosophical system of Śaṅkara as 'uncritical' or even as 'unphilosophical.' It is, however, sheer perversity to apply a standardised method of evaluation all through, and on such application brand a system as 'uncritical', simply because it does not fall in with the current standard of critical thinking. No one, even with a modicum of historic sense, would make the preposterous claim that our standard of critical evaluation should be applicable *in toto* to a system dating twelve centuries back. Apart from a glaring historical anachronism involved in such a procedure, the claim itself is, on the very face of it, arbitrary and irrational. In reckoning his claims to be called a philosophical thinker, Śaṅkara must be placed in

his proper historical setting and judged accordingly. Here, as elsewhere the supreme or crucial test is 'how strive you?' and whatever we may choose to call him, 'the sin of unlit lamp and the ungirt loin,' in the matter of critical thinking, can by no means be imputed to him. His frequent insistence on *jijñāsā* (a sifting enquiry), *vicāra* (ratiocination) and *mīmāṃsā* (critical investigation) surely admits him into the rank of philosophical inquirers of all ages and of all climes. What, however, decides once for all his claim to be reckoned a critical thinker, in the modern sense of the term, is an epoch-making pronouncement of his with regard to the status and function of *vicāra* or rational criticism in the matter of attaining unto the highest bliss of mankind. Entrenched, as he was, in a rigid orthodoxy, Śaṅkara had yet the hardihood to assert with all the emphasis he could command that a man who somehow espouses a creed without a prior discussion or critical reflexion is debarred from beatitude and incurs evil.<sup>1</sup> For an orthodox thinker of Śaṅkara's eminence, this must be pronounced to be a remarkable verdict—which is, however, hardly ever given the prominence it deserves. In thus formulating the rights of private judgment (विचारः) in the face of *Śruti* or *Āgama*, that is, Authority, Śaṅkara may be said to have shuffled off the antiquated badge of mediævalism and taken on that of modernism. His critical apparatus or dialectical machinery may not have approximated the modern standard, but it is the rational mood or temper that prompted this verdict of his which is to be regarded the sole arbiter of his claims. Hence the apologetic strain in which we sometimes speak of the claims of Śaṅkara as a philosophic thinker is altogether uncalled for and unjust.

Now, we are in a position to take stock of our findings, from the cultural standpoint of the Vedānta, in our retrospective review of the foregoing lectures. The first lecture started with the admission of what seems to be of central importance

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1 तद्विचारार्थं यत्किञ्चित् प्रतिपद्यमानो निःश्रेयसात् प्रतिहन्तेतानर्थज्ञेयात्—Com. on V. S. I. 1. i.

in the Vedānta—namely, the message of a full-fledged autonomy of the Spirit which, although brooding on us perpetually like ‘a presence which is not to be put by’, is only the legacy of the privileged few who have realised in their own experience the oneness of their being with the spirit behind the mighty frame of nature, symbolised by that dynamical sublime, the *Pūshan* or Sun-god in the sky. Accordingly, the well-known invocation to Sun-God in the *Īśopaniṣad*<sup>1</sup>—“O thou all-sustaining, solitary, all-controlling Sun, descended from the Lord of all creatures, do thou restrain and centralise all the streaks of light that I may envisage thy blissful countenance ; forsooth, I am the very Being that abides in thee”—may be taken as symptomatic of the Vedānta as a whole, and the cult of spiritual worship it has prescribed. It is the realisation of this oneness of spirit that alone can afford a sense of security and peace that man is ever hankering after. So runs the testimony of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*<sup>2</sup> among many others : ‘अमयं वै जगत् प्राप्नोति’, But no man in his senses would claim that this realisation of oneness of Being,—this priceless legacy of the ancient world—sprang perfect into existence, like Juno from the head of Jupiter, and could be found in a full-fledged form in the Hymns of the *Ṛgveda*, which, by common consent, mark the germinal beginnings of Vedantic thought and culture. While fully subscribing to the principle that the Vedānta, and in particular its essence, Advaitism, is implanted in the Veda (वेदे वेदान्तः सुप्रतिष्ठितः), one need not, and indeed must not, construe the principle with a literalness that strikes at the very root of all notion of development. In fact, it is not possible within the meaning of the law of development, to have the flower along with the fruit, for the simple reason that the decay of the flower is the condition of the appearance of the fruit. The attempt, on the part of these well-meaning apologists of *Ṛgvedic* thought, is symptomatic of the absolutist’s Absolute,

1 पूषन्नेकैर् यम सूर्यं प्राजापत्यव्यूहं रश्मीन् समूहं तेजो यत्ते रूपं कल्याणतमं तत्ते पश्चामि योऽसावसौ पूषन् सोऽहमस्मि ।

2 Chap. IV. Brāhmaṇa ii. 4.

which, on Bradley's own showing 'has no seasons, but all at once bears its leaves, fruit and blossom.' But the question of a steady development of thought from the Ṛgveda to the Upanishads, as we may conveniently note here, may itself be challenged and repudiated as being only a favourite dogma of the modernist. Indeed, it has been seriously maintained that the trend of reflective thought from the Ṛgveda to the Upanishads exhibits a steady degeneration, rather than an evolution in respect of 'the sacredness and secrecy of self-knowledge and the true knowledge of the gods.' The plea is, therefore, trotted out for an occultist treatment of the hymns of the Ṛgveda as in the case of 'the historical Eleusinian and Orphic mysteries' of ancient Greece. To seek to stem the tide of approved scholarship and widespread acceptance is sure to be laughed out as mid-summer madness on the part of its author. But the sponsor of this peculiar hypothesis stands in a class apart, and his name is a sufficient guarantee against summary rejection or any other disrespectful treatment. But the superior claim that he has upon our regard gives him no immunity from criticism when he enters the arena of polemics and pleads, in a confessedly rational manner, for a preferential treatment of things that are supposed to be above and beyond reason in its normal functioning. Such an esotericism or aristocratism to say the least of it, is fundamentally at variance with the native absolutism of the human intellect which squares, paradoxically enough, with the democratic temper of our age. Indeed, the effort to take shelter behind a supra-rational Authority is a discredited relic of Mediævalism and pseudo-mysticism, and is unquestionably a glaring instance of historical anachronism in this age of rationalism and free thinking. Without reverting to discussion on the thorny problem of Authority vs freethinking, it may be safely laid down that the endeavour of the mystery-mongers and high-browed esoterics fails to uphold the cause of either—to command authority in the one case and induce conviction in the other. It is too late in the day to learn that truth is one organic whole, just as reason, as the only availing guide in our search after truth,

is also unitary in character, and that, therefore in the republic of the Vedānta we can acknowledge no other authority except that of reason. It is undoubtedly, a question of principle, and not merely one of modernism or spirit of the times (*Zeitgeist*). For, it is preposterous to suggest that truth is to be obtained by a counting of heads. Truth does not, and most certainly did not, as the history of human civilisation clearly shows, depend on a majority of votes to enforce its acceptance. It rules everywhere by its own inherent right. When the historic martyr to truth stood up, like another *Athanasius contra mundum*, in defiance of the universally accepted creed and the impending persecution staring at him, and exclaimed: "still it moves" (*ep̄pur si muove*), the principle was amply vindicated. Nor is this radical breach in the nature of reason—from which alone the distinction between the esoteric and exoteric truth derives all its plausibility—conducive to the best interests of the 'spiritual and psychological knowledge of the race' which the scholar-mystic holds a brief for. If this so-called sacred and secret knowledge had to thrive upon this breach in human nature and had no other *locus standi* to count upon, it would have stood upon a precarious foundation indeed. If truth be really what it is represented to be, then reason and unreason cannot equal abide therein; for, unreason in aught is unreason in all. If reason in its analytic function is pressed, as it needs must be, into the service of this mystical knowledge, it must be all in all or never be at all. For, the spectre of reflective thought once summoned to our aid can not conveniently be laid in its grave. Indeed, those who seek to gain a Pyrrhic victory for the cause of esoteric or mystical knowledge by thus antagonising it to the clear deliverances of reason seem to be hardly conscious of the dangerous precedent they are thereby creating. For, such a procedure has its inevitable Nemesis in that common ruin which awaits all the hard-won findings of an occult or mysterious organ of the soul. In point of fact, mysticism does not enjoy such a precarious eminence. Anti-intellectualism or anti-rationalism is the plea of the pseudo-mystic only. It is in reference to these pseudo-mystics that

Plāto made the remark in the *Phædo* : 'Many are the thyrsus-bearers, but few are the mystics'. 'The mystic, forsooth, is one 'who believes in spiritual apprehension of truths beyond the understanding.' The name *μύστης* would originally be given to 'one initiated' or to a priest of secret rites of divine worship. This affords an instructive comparison with the radical meaning of the term '*Upanishad*', which, as derived from the root 'उद्' ('*ud*'=to sit) with the prefixes of उप ('*Upa*') and नि ('*ni*'), means—Śaṅkara's interpretation, notwithstanding—'that which is imparted to the (initiated) disciple when he sits close to his preceptor ;—hence, a 'secret doctrine or mystery' (गूढार्थः, रहस्यम् इति विद्या and so forth). The word *μυστήριον* is, again, cognate with *μυεῖν* which literally means 'closing of lips or eyes'—perhaps as being symbolic, and suggestive of withdrawal of the senses from the scene of their operation and concentration within the soul. It is strikingly similar to the literal as well as symbolic meaning of अश्रितचक्षुः (*āśritacakshuḥ*) or 'closed eyes' that occur in the opening verse of the second chapter of *Kaṭhōpanishad*, which, again, in its turn is strongly reminiscent of the 'averted eye' of the Pythagoreans. There is undeniably in man's nature a haunting passion for a Beyond, a twilight region, or a realm beyond the 'senses—figuring more or less as the outlying penumbra of the known. It is from this region, as Bradley would have us believe, that 'philosophy as a satisfaction of what may be called the mystical side of our nature' derives its constant inspiration : only 'when the sense of mystery and enchantment no longer draws the mind to wander aimlessly and to love it knows not what ; when, in short, twilight has no charm—then metaphysics will be worthless'.<sup>1</sup> This is one, perhaps the only one, way of ensuring the satisfaction of the mystical side of our being—through an intellectual effort to understand the universe ; and with certain persons, among whom Bradley is one, it is a 'principal way of experiencing the Deity'. But when it is claimed that 'the Vedic hymns were conceived and constructed' in such a way as to convey 'a spiritual sense

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<sup>1</sup> *Appearance and Reality*, Introduction.

for the elect' and the 'initiate', terminating eventually in 'self-knowledge and the true knowledge of the gods', it is instructive to note, as Bradley clearly affirms, that 'there is no calling or pursuit which is a private road to the Deity', and that 'there is no sin' 'which philosophy can justify so little as spiritual pride'. Granted that the initiate are privy to this sacred and secret knowledge from which the vulgar and the profane are shut out, and like Browning's musicians it is they that can say : 'it is we mystics know'. But that knowledge from which reason is debarred on pain of profanation has not even that redeeming grace of letting down the ladder for the vulgar and the uninitiate, which entitles it to the name of 'knowledge'. When all is said and done, one feels that there is a peculiar persuasiveness inherent in the claim thus advanced on behalf of the hymns of the Ṛgveda. At the same time there is some pathos attaching to this forlorn endeavour to 'espouse a dying cause and stick to it unto the last. But whatever the nature of the appeal, the truth-claim of this hypothesis cannot reasonably be endorsed by any systematic study of the kind to which this course of lectures stands pledged. What is, however, instructive to note in regard to the question of a continuous development from the Ṛgveda to the Upanishads is, in the luminous phraseology of the late Prof. Wallace, that 'all development is by breaks and yet makes for continuity'.

The conceptual formulation of the Hymns of the Ṛgveda by way of three recognised strata of naturalistic polytheism, spiritualistic monotheism, and speculative (or agnostic) monism hardly does justice to Ṛgvedic thought and culture as a whole. There may, roughly speaking, be distinguished six stages in the history of human culture and civilisation, and it is usual to reckon six stages in the development of a philosophical doctrine or thought-type, the second half recapitulating the first half on a higher plane and thus constituting what has been aptly called the method of spiral progress.<sup>1</sup> The first in the

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<sup>1</sup> Vide Dr. B. N. Seal and his illuminating notes on this point in his "Syllabus of Lectures."

first half is the Magic stage which invariably expresses itself in social instincts and postulates expressed in rituals. The second is the Myth stage in which the ingrained mythopœic activity of the race bursts forth in the form of myth, folklore, beast fables etc. The third is the Symbol stage which evinces a growing maturity in symbolization and sublimation of myth and ritual. Now, the fourth stage in the series (which is but the reproduction of the first on a higher plane in this spiral of progress), is the stage of Dogma manifesting itself in varying degrees of conceptual abstraction—in pictorial imagination, in *vortsellung*, as the *alterum idem* of the thing, and in creed. The fifth is the stage of Rationalisation proper with its elaboration and perfection of the conceptual apparatus in the form of Critique and Dialectic—of *Pūrvapaksha*, *Uttarapaksha* and *Siddhānta*. The sixth and the final stage in the series is the stage not of *θεωρία* merely, but of *πραξις*, of *sādhana* or realisation. Applying this formula to the famous doctrine of Karma and its evolution in Indian Culture history we have the following series. The first stage is that of *Yajna karma* as ritual drawing its inspiration from the instinct of continued personal existence or will to live and expressing itself in ritualistic performances for heaven (*svarga*), and from the instinct of race-preservation and manifesting itself in rituals for fertilization, fecundity, or race-multiplication. The germinal beginning of this law of Karma makes itself felt also, in this very first stage, as certain *saṃskāras*, family and tribal customs, as sacraments and the like. The second is the stage of myth formation which crystallizes as the myth of the double path of *prayāṇa* (outward journey) and of *panarāvṛtti* (return journey), of Heaven and hell and the like—pointing unmistakably to what is known as the doctrine of the transmigration of souls or metempsychosis. The third stage in the evolution of the law of Karma is that of symbolization or sublimation of *Yajnas*, *Tapas*, *Samskāras*, as rituals—such as we have in the different Upanishads and the *Gītā*. The fourth stage which marks the beginning of conceptual formulation naturally expresses itself in the Dogma of Karma conceived as a Law along with the entire para-



phernalia of *saṃcita* and *Prārabdha Karma* together with the idea of a cyclical existence. The fifth stage is that of Moral causation and its dialectic revealing itself in a code of injunctions and prohibitions (*vidhinishedha*), *niyoga* being the ground of Karma. It is on this stage that a rational enquiry into the relation between *Karma* as Law and free of will of man and *Karma* and *Īśvara* or the Moral Governor of the universe is fully envisaged. The sixth and the final stage in the development of the law of Karma is the emergence of the notion of value (*purushārtha*), intrinsic and instrumental, of *ṃpāṣis* and *sādhana* or disciplines, and of the relation of the way of *Karma* (*karmamārga*) to *Paramapurushārtha*, the *Summum Bonum* and *Moksha* or redemption as a final release from the domination of the Law of Karma.

Similarly, reviewing the various states in the development of the thought-types or categories in religious philosophy among the early Vedāntic teachers, we find *Kāśakṛtsna*<sup>1</sup> employing the category of absolute identity in conceiving the relation between the individual and the universal self, *Āśmarathya*<sup>2</sup> and *Śaṇḍilya* teaching an identity-in-difference, *Audulomi* inculcating difference before absorption,<sup>3</sup> and finally, *Kāśyapa* insisting on a fundamental difference between the two. Our interest in these early conceptual formulations of one of the main problems of the Vedānta is that they are the distinct anticipations of a more articulate and dialectical defence of these in Śaṅkara-Vedānta, Rāmānuja, Nimbārka (and Bhāskara), and Madhvācāryya—comparing not unfavourably with the so-called 'review-course' (*Repetitionkursus*) in contemporary German thought of the phases of the Kantian movement in the well-recognised movements of Neo-Kantianism, Neo-Fichteanism, Neo-Hegelianism and Neo-Romanticism.

Now, what is the net result, it will be asked, of our findings with regard to the Vedānta from the standpoint of an all-round culture? Deussen thinks that 'the New Testament and the

1 e.g. in the V.S. अवस्थितेरिति काशकृत्स्नः—I. 4. xxii.

2 e.g. in V.S. प्रतिज्ञासिद्धेर्निगमाश्रयः—I. 4. xx.

3 e.g. in V.S. उत्पन्नमिथ्यत एवभावादित्यौदुलोभिः—I. 4. xxi.

Upanishads, these two noblest products of the religious consciousness of mankind, are found when we sound their deeper meaning to be nowhere in irreconcilable contradiction, but in a manner, the most attractive, serve to elucidate and complete one another'.<sup>1</sup> The supplementation in question, according to Deussen, appears in relation to the central teaching of each. " 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' is the requirement of the Bible" and this injunction remains inexplicable and unauthoritative, until the Vedānta adds by way of explanation the reason therefor: "Because thy neighbour is in truth thy very self, and what separates you from him is mere illusion."<sup>2</sup> Apart from the fact that Deussen has not sustained this position, all through his book, the comparison in question is altogether inapt and unsatisfactory. The Upanishads might not unreasonably suffer under the pressure of this somewhat embarrassing charity displayed in paying to them a compliment they do not go in for. Whatever may be the point of comparison between the 'Sermon on the Mount' and the Upanishads, the latter do neither claim to be, nor are in point of fact, sermons or injunctions figuring as so many copy-book headings for the guidance of our lives. What the Upanishads profess to do is not to lay down rules for the betterment of our daily lives, but to enlighten us as to the spirit in which our lives are to be lived. Indeed, having, as it does, in view a good, higher than that of action, the good or blessedness of a *vita contemplativa*, the Upanishads conceive their main function to be the creation of a spiritual atmosphere and not the formulation of an ethical code. In their functioning, the Upanishads emulate that all-pervading ether which works invisibly and unceasingly, but does not vibrate into light. The ineptitude of the comparison should not have escaped the notice of a scholar of Deussen's eminence. What has some semblance of justification is their comparison with the ~~first maxim~~ of Pure Practical Reason as formulated by Immanuel Kant viz.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*, p. 49.

• <sup>2</sup> *Loc. cit.*

“So act that the principle of thy action can be consistently universalised.” The point of the comparison consists in their respective answers to the question of the spirit in which our lives are to be lived—in the enunciation, in short, of an *a priori* maxim of universal applicability. Both acquiesce, on the whole, in the same merits and demerits. The barren formalism of a principle of universal legislation which fails to give us a concrete code of maxims, or a guidance in the practical concerns of life, must naturally and necessarily provoke its own Nemesis in the entire set of casuistical literature that has followed in the wake of both. The criticism may not be relished by the Vedāntists, but it is none the less true. It is undeniable that Kant sought to obviate the empty formalism of his teachings in the proposal to make Humanity always the end of action, and never a means only—that is to say, the happiness of humanity, represented in your neighbour, always the end of our action. Whether the cult of ‘the love of one’s neighbour’ has failed or not is writ large across the face of history which, if Croce is right, is but contemporary history. But that is not the point of philosophical importance in this connection. It is just when Kant was warming up to the idea of a ‘unity of our lives as a systematic whole’, as a ‘Kingdom of Ends’, he was moved, by reason of a hampering prejudice and fatal dualism, to neutralise the force of this fruitful conception with a characteristically Kantian ‘as if.’ The saving clause ‘as if’ does not save but damns for ever the Kingdom of Ends which, we are told, on its authority, has a mere heuristic or regulative validity but lacks a constitutive one. Thus punctuated and sterilised, the Kingdom of Ends—which could have developed far more fruitfully than what Kant could have intended it to do—becomes in the end one of those ‘floating air-bubbles, gay in the sunshine and broken by the passing wind.’ Is not in all conscience, the injunction of **समदर्शनं** that we have in the Gītā, although backed by the metaphysical oneness of being of the Śaṅkara-Vedānta, confronted with the same deadlock in practice, and pursued by the same aftermath of casuistry that the other draws in

its wake? Indeed, we must look for the cultural significance of the Vedānta elsewhere—not in any positive prescripts that it might have unconsciously enforced, but in the very abstention, therefrom, because its function is mainly limitative or prohibitive. When there is even the remotest suspicion of its acquiring a positive signification, the Upanishadic thinker hastens at once to correct that misdirection. That is why the high-pitched key on which the *Ishābāsyopaniṣad* begins thus :

“इशावास्यमिदं सर्वं यत् किञ्च जगत्या जगत्  
तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथाः”

i.e. “whatever is active in this world is to be known as permeated by the Lord and to be enjoyed as provided by Him”—and is in the very next line saddled with a negation which appears to many as a fall from the sublime to the ridiculous—an anti-climax : “मागृषः कस्यसिद्धन्तम्” “enjoy but do not covet any other man’s wealth”; but it is, in fact, no bathos, nothing of the kind. No high-flown idealism can afford, without prejudice to its own safety, to neglect making sure of the *terra firma* of the elementary Levitical morals on which it has to stand. Summarily speaking, Vedāntism stands for the cult of ‘no-cult.’ Although it is of the nature of a paradox, that appears to be the exact transcript of its attitude towards the universe. It presents the impressive spectacle of the Spirit of Humanity passing under review all the distracting cults of human existence, demanding divided allegiance from them, and giving the redemptive warning “नेदं यदिदमुपासते” It is in bitter earnest with the ‘Everlasting Nay’ which, in its view, must be pressed to its ultimate limit before ‘the Everlasting ‘Yea’ of a blessed life symbolised by ‘Aum’ can make itself felt to us ; for it is grounded in the belief that in spiritual things ‘the greatness of the price we pay has’ much to do with the value of the good that we acquire.’ In thus carrying out its life-giving mission it strongly reminds the discerning mind of the much persecuted preacher of Galilee, drawing men away from the delusive worship of earthly gods with the perpetual reminder : “My kingdom is not of this world !” This *via negativa* is no more

the last word in the one case than it is in the other. It does not land us, as is sometimes apprehended, in sheer emptiness or negation. If the negative prescript were to terminate in pure negation or blank, would it (in all propriety) be called the true of the true, as asks Śaṅkara most significantly?<sup>1</sup>

Thus is revealed ultimately the source of abiding inspiration for the Vedāntist. It is the spirit of the Whole, which does not allow us to halt at any half-way house, but bids us march past till the goal is reached. This, the underlying and informing spirit of the Whole, may best be indicated, in the words of Bradley, as 'Justice in the name of the whole to each aspect of the world according to its special place and proper rank—Reality everywhere through self-restriction in claim and in denial.' Well might the Vedāntist declare in Bradley's own words: "Everywhere on behalf of the real Absolute I have been warning, [all] against that false absolutism which in philosophy is to me another name for error . . . as against such absolutism, the very soul of the Absolute which I defend is its insistence and emphasis on an all-pervasive relativism." Accordingly, 'one main work of philosophy,' for the Vedāntist as much for Bradley 'is to show that, where there is isolation and abstraction, there is everywhere, so far as this abstraction forgets itself, unreality and error.'<sup>2</sup> Critics there will be who would repudiate this version of the Vedānta as unorthodox, and as being fundamentally at variance with the ingrained 'Oriental despotism' that has never respected the rights of minority and which makes its appearance in philosophy as absolutism in its objectionable sense. But instead of submitting to this parrot's 'training, constantly dinned into our ears, we should bring an unprejudiced mind to bear on the situation and see if we have not in the epistemological rendering of the doctrine of '*adhikāribheda*', a full substantiation of the case for the Absolute as presented by Bradley. It is under the perennial inspiration of that spirit

1 अभावावसाने तु प्रतिषेधे किं सत्यस्य सत्यमित्युच्येत—Com. on V.S. III<sup>1</sup> 2. xxii.

2 *Essays on Truth and Reality*, Conclusion.

of the Whole, that the Vedāntist passes by the cult of family, society, nationalism, or even internationalism, with the characteristic anathema—नेदं यदिदमुपासते. Such other-worldliness may not be quite in tune with the spirit of modernism, but it is there and must make itself heard. "The roots of modern philosophy", so writes one European Historian of Philosophy, "are sunk deep in the fruitful soil of nationality, while the top of the tree spreads itself far beyond national limitations. It is national and cosmopolitan together; it is international as the common property of the various peoples which exchange their philosophical gifts through an active commerce of ideas."<sup>1</sup> Nothing could be a truer description of the cult of internationalism that has its root struck deep in the soil of nationality! Ah, there is the rub! Mischief, they say, always lies about the root. A Parliament or Federation of Mankind, must forever remain an idle dream, and a League of Nations is too apt to degenerate into a clique of nations, until and unless the making of the international mind is an accomplished fact; and this has the greatest chance of materialising under the perpetual inspiration of the Vedāntic cult of 'no-cult', or what is the same thing, the inspiration of a Church Invisible. The method of working from bottom upwards has been tried and found wanting. Why not try the other—namely, of working from above downwards. That is why the Upanishadic sage, with unerring prophetic vision, declares that this ancient holy fig tree (symbolising the Infinite and the Eternal, the ब्रह्मा) has its roots in heaven and its branches spreading downwards (उद्भूतोऽबाक्शाख एषोऽवत्यः सनातनः). This is however, no mere dream of some future possibility, of some 'far-off divine event', no mere vague aspiration of the Futurist, but is verily the Everlasting Real, dwelling in us, 'nearer than our hands and feet'. It is easy to deride the notion and take to the blunt Johnsonian method of refuting an idea by kicking against it. If, in short, it is contended that such a vision of perfect unity or human solidarity is too good to be true, the

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<sup>1</sup> Falckenberg, *History of Modern Philosophy*.<sup>4</sup> Introduction.

Vedāntist can meet that contingency by saying that the vision is too good *not* to be true. It is no mere remote theological mystery, but God be thanked, it is inwoven with the very texture of our experience. Accordingly, for the Vedānta *Brahman* or *Bhūmā*, the Infinite, is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and last of all things. It starts on its career with ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा, enquiry into Brahman, as the supreme good of man, sustains our interest therein by the perpetual reminder that it is the *Bhūmā* that alone is to be enquired into (भूमात्वेव विजिज्ञासितव्यः), and closes on the high-pitched key :—“Do thou enquire into that. Verily that is Brahman.” (तद्विजिज्ञासस्व । तद्वद्वेति)।

## CORRIGENDA.

Page	2 line	29	<i>after</i>	presentation of	<i>insert</i>	the Vedānta
"	6 "	18	<i>for</i>	practicle	<i>read</i>	practical
"	18 "	7	<i>for</i>	enjoyments	<i>read</i>	enjoyment,
"	19 "	15	<i>for</i>	inmate	<i>read</i>	innate
"	22 "	28	<i>for</i>	these	<i>read</i>	those
"	23 "	28	<i>insert</i>	of yore	<i>after</i>	would
"	27 "	19	<i>for</i>	revealed	<i>read</i>	reveals
"	28 "	25	<i>for</i>	soil, clothed	<i>read</i>	soil clothed
"	36 "	21	<i>for</i>	staggared	<i>read</i>	staggered
"	37 f.n.		<i>for</i>	— <i>Ibid.</i>	<i>read</i>	— <i>Nirukta</i>
"	38 "	11	<i>for</i>	anthoposophy	<i>read</i>	anthroposophy
"	40 "	20	<i>for</i>	believes	<i>read</i>	belies
"	" f.n.		<i>for</i>	ससद्धारति	<i>read</i>	सुसद्धारति
"	41 line	3	<i>for</i>	his	<i>read</i>	this
"	41 "	19	<i>for</i>	into	<i>read</i>	unto
"	51 "	15	<i>for</i>	it illustrates	<i>read</i>	illustrates
"	52 f.n.		<i>for</i>	महिना	<i>read</i>	महिमा
"	67 line	10	<i>for</i>	exemplar	<i>read</i>	exemplar
"	70 "	9	<i>for</i>	latern	<i>read</i>	lantern
"	71 "	3	<i>for</i>	in	<i>read</i>	is
"	76 "	5	<i>for</i>	poety	<i>read</i>	poetry
"	79 "	10	<i>for</i>	therefroce	<i>read</i>	therefore
"	82 "	12	<i>for</i>	Self-consiousness	<i>read</i>	Self-consciousness
"	89 "	20	<i>for</i>	its apotheosis	<i>read</i>	its own apotheosis
"	95 "	22	<i>for</i>	in the one	<i>read</i>	on the one hand
"	96 "	36	<i>for</i>	other	<i>read</i>	others
"	98 "	32	<i>for</i>	scriptual	<i>read</i>	scriptural
"	100 "	6	<i>for</i>	these	<i>read</i>	there
"	102 f.n.		<i>for</i>	कार्यानुवेप्रश्न	<i>read</i>	कार्यानुप्रवेशः
"	106 line	8	<i>for</i>	owns as	<i>read</i>	owns it as
"	107 "	23	<i>for</i>	in indeterminate	<i>read</i>	in determinate
"	108 "	13	<i>for</i>	in determinate	<i>read</i>	in indeterminate
"	109 "	31	<i>for</i>	one part	<i>read</i>	our part
"	110 "	7	<i>for</i>	as under	<i>read</i>	as under
"	119 f.n.		<i>for</i>	जगत	<i>read</i>	जगती
"	120 f.n.		<i>for</i>	चित्तले	<i>read</i>	चित्तले
"	122 line	7	<i>for</i>	of a 'marginal or even of a	<i>read</i>	as a marginal or even a



Page	136 f. n.	for	अरामवाचीद्वारः and read परिच्छेदः	गमवाचीद्वारः परिच्छेदः	and
„	139 line 6	for	must appearance	read	must give appearance
„	140 „ 10	for	alternative	read	alternative
„	142 „ 4	for	space	read	space
„	143 „ 3	for	category	read	category.
„	„ „ 15	for	नित्यत्व	read	नित्यत्वे
„	144 „ 14	for	give	read	gives
„	„ „ 18	for	in	read	on
„	145 „ 26	for	unite	read	untie
„	152 „ 30	for	so is the pot-form	read	—so does the pot-form
„	„ „ 31	for	reveals	read	reveal
„	158 „ 20	for	rôles”1	read	rôles
„	167 „ 9	for	neglected	read	negated
„	171 „ 20	for	and co-eternal	read	is co-eternal
„	177 „ 13	for	far Prof.	read	far as Prof.
„	„ „ 20	for	So far	read	Far
„	179 „ 25	for	hypothetical characters	read	imaginary limits
„	180 „ 7	for	least	read	best
„	183 „ 28	for	in	read	by
„	189 „ 15	for	inconsistences	read	inconsistencies
„	„ „ 26	for	words	read	word
„	194 „ 19	for	materials	read	materialis
„	202 f.n.	for	विषय	read	विषय
„	207 line 23	for	sequal	read	sequel
„	„ „ 28	for	more	read	mere
„	210 „ 10	for	case	read	cause
„	219 „ 17	for	Admission that “that	read	admission “that
„	220 „ 6	for	secret	read	secrets
„	231 „ 3	for	thriugh	read	through
„	„ „ 21	for	resumes its	read	resume their
„	„ f.n.	for	समवाची	read	समवाची
„	233 „ 31	for	form	read	former
„	237 „ 23	for	animating	read	affirming
„	238 „ 7	for	tre	read	the
„	239 „ 23	for	temred	read	termed
„	„ „ 31	for	Ekajīvauda	read	Ekajīvauda
„	251 lines 8-9	substitute life which	after deleting altogether these		two lines.
„	„ line 19	for	monastic	read	monistic
„	253 „ 32	for	commandered	read	commandeered
„	256 „ 12	for	of	read	for
„	„ f.n.	for	मुख	read	मुखः
„	257 „ 17	for	antonomy	read	autonomy

Page 258	„ 18	for	pointed	read	painted.
„ 260	f.n.	for	सुखं	read	सुखं ,
„ 264	line 13	for	are	read	—is
„ 267	„ 1	for	this	read	the
„ 270	„ 16	for	phliosophy	read	philosophy
„ 279	f.n.	for	ज्ञेयात्	read	ज्ञेयात्
„ 284	f.n.	for	Dr. B. N. Seal	read	Dr. B. N. Seal's
			and his		
„ 285	line 10	for	vortsellung	read	vorstellung
„ 286	„ 15	for	states	read	stages







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